



## **SIMULATION: FEDERALISM AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

### **Response to a Natural Disaster**

#### **AP Gov/Ms. Strong**



OVERVIEW - The massive destruction of Hurricane Harvey in August 2017 left much of eastern Texas in ruin. The disaster precipitated a national emergency, especially in the city of Houston. The region received upwards of 51” of rain over a four-day period, causing catastrophic flooding and 81 confirmed deaths. The resulting floods inundated hundreds of thousands of homes, displaced more than 30,000 people, left 300,000 without power, and destroyed thousands of homes and businesses. The closure of oil refineries in the Gulf of Mexico created a temporary fuel shortage, and the overall financial losses from the storm is projected to be over \$100 billion.

DIRECTIONS - The class will be divided into "government level" teams: 1) the Federal Government, 2) Texas State Government and 3) Local Government, the City of Houston. Group members will brainstorm solutions to the tasks below in response to Hurricane Harvey and its aftermath. Using laptops, each team will create a PowerPoint on Google Drive to be used in the presentation.

GOOGLE DRIVE DIRECTIONS - 1) Name the Doc: # Per\_FedSim\_Government Level [example: 1<sup>st</sup> Per\_FedSim\_Federal Gov], 2) Invite Ms. Strong at [jstrong@k12albemarle.org](mailto:jstrong@k12albemarle.org) 3) Include your government level and list all group members on Slide 1.

All simulation instructions, resources and make up assignments can be found on Ms. Strong’s website:  
<http://jstrongapgov.weebly.com/foundations-of-american-democracy.html>

I. SIMULATION ACTION PLAN - The government level teams will create an Action Plan to respond to the hurricane and its aftermath. Each team will brainstorm the tasks to be performed during and after the event, identify relevant government agencies or departments, and non-government organizations to carry out the tasks identified in the action plan. Each government team will produce a brief PowerPoint and present their findings to the class in the form of a press conference. The PowerPoint slides must include following areas:

- 1) *Immediate Tasks During the Crisis* (the first 72 hours) – Based on your team’s government level, create a list of tasks during and immediately after the hurricane, and identify the resources and assets required to carry out those tasks (i.e. what government agencies/assets will carry out the various tasks). [About 3 slides]
- 2) *Long Term Tasks* - Identify the long-term goals in the months and years after the crisis is resolved -- what problems do you foresee down the road that need to be addressed? [HINT: Consider economic recovery, concerns about health and environment, rebuilding infrastructure, restoring energy production, etc.] What government agencies, departments and resources along with private sector assets need to be mobilized in the months ahead to deal with the hurricane’s aftermath? [about 3 slides]

NOTE: In order to complete the PowerPoint in the appointed amount of time, the group may need to break down into smaller sub-group or “agencies.”

II. PRESENTATION PRESS CONFERENCE (5-10 MINUTES): Each government group will present their findings in the form of a press conference. Each of the presenters should take on the role of a specific government official (ex: Director of FEMA (federal), Governor of Texas, Mayor of Houston). Members of the audience will play the role of reporters and may ask questions or make comments.

III. DEBRIEFING: After the presentations, the class will discuss the questions below.

- 1) Identify the tasks that must be shared by all three levels of government. How should coordination occur to carry out these tasks (i.e. who’s in charge)?
- 2) Identify the tasks that could/should only be carried out by the local, state or federal governments.
- 3) What generalizations can you make regarding a domestic terrorist attack and it’s impact on American federalism?

## **Government Agencies Responding to a Natural Disaster**

### **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (includes the President, White House Staff, Cabinet Secretaries, Congress, Independent Agencies)**

- ❖ **Department of Agriculture** - coordinates damage assessments to area crops, livestock, and other agriculture-related operations.
- ❖ **Department of Defense** - Assists FEMA and National Guard after disaster declarations are issued for assistance in security, cleanup.
- ❖ **Department of Energy** – regulates and supports oil, natural gas, nuclear industries, nation’s electric grid.
- ❖ **Department of Health and Human Services** - deploys U.S. Public Health Service Officers to effected areas on standby for deployment to support medical response.
- ❖ **Department of Homeland Security** – Manages federal assistance and provides resources to effected areas.
- ❖ **Department of Labor** – provides disaster unemployment assistance and National Emergency Grants and assists in job recovery programs.
- ❖ **Department of Transportation** - dispatches trucks deliver millions of meals ready to eat, water and supplies, mobile homes, generators, etc. to affected areas; assists in long-term repair/rebuilding of roads and other transportation infrastructures.
- ❖ **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)** – provides supplies, equipment, and financial assistance to victims and Disaster Medical Assistance Teams to areas hit by natural disasters.
- ❖ **National Hurricane Center** – Tracks, names and predicts the likely behavior of tropical storms and hurricanes and issues appropriate watches and warnings to the public.
- ❖ Search and rescue.
- ❖ **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** – Plans, designs, builds and operates dams, levees and other civil engineering projects.
- ❖ **U.S. Coast Guard** – provides aircraft, patrol boats and cutters to conduct search, rescue and humanitarian aid operations.

### **STATE GOVERNMENT (includes the Governor, State Legislatures and Agencies)**

- ❖ **National Guard** – though a federal entity, may be called by governors to provide search and rescue, assisting local law enforcement, and supplies to victims.
- ❖ **State Department of Health** – assists in disease control, and management of public health crisis in effected areas.
- ❖ **State Emergency Management Agencies** – helps to coordinate shelters, supplies, health care, and transportation for recovery efforts.
- ❖ **State Department of Education** – help displaced school children and teachers integrate back into other schools.
- ❖ **State Police** – state law enforcement.

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (includes Mayors, Municipal or County Boards or Councils, Agencies)**

- ❖ **Local Law Enforcement** – police, sheriff departments with primary law enforcement responsibility.
- ❖ **Local Fire Department** – first responders to carry out search and rescue operations.
- ❖ **Local Emergency Services** – first responders to medical emergencies.
- ❖ **Local Public Transportation (buses, trains, subways)** – transportation for possible evacuation.
- ❖ **Social Services** – provides assistance to families, individuals in need.

### **PRIVATE OR NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

- ❖ **American Red Cross** – provides temporary shelter, supplies, relief workers and support to disaster victims.
- ❖ **The Salvation Army** - provides services (food, clothing, etc.) to survivors and first responders in the effected areas.

#### **Sources:**

<http://www.firstgov.gov>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane\\_Harvey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane_Harvey)