

States for the reasonable costs incurred by the United States in responding to such disaster or emergency to the extent that such costs are attributable to the intentional act or omission of such person which caused such condition. Such action shall be brought in an appropriate United States District Court.

(b) *Rendering of care.* A person shall not be liable under this section for costs incurred by the United States as a result of actions taken or omitted by such person in the course of rendering care or assistance in response to a major disaster or emergency.

**§ 206.16 Audit and investigations.**

(a) Subject to the provisions of chapter 75 of title 31, United States Code, and 44 CFR part 14, relating to requirements for single audits, the Associate Director or Regional Director shall conduct audits and investigations as necessary to assure compliance with the Stafford Act, and in connection therewith may question such persons as may be necessary to carry out such audits and investigations.

(b) For purposes of audits and investigations under this section, FEMA or State auditors, the Governor’s Authorized Representative, the Regional Director, the Associate Director, and the Comptroller General of the United States, or their duly authorized representatives, may inspect any books, documents, papers, and records of any person relating to any activity undertaken or funded under the Stafford Act.

**§ 206.17 Effective date.**

These regulations are effective for all major disasters or emergencies declared on or after November 23, 1988.

**§§ 206.18–206.30 [Reserved]**

**Subpart B—The Declaration Process**

SOURCE: 55 FR 2292, Jan. 23, 1990, unless otherwise noted.

**§ 206.31 Purpose.**

The purpose of this subpart is to describe the process leading to a Presidential declaration of a major disaster

or an emergency and the actions triggered by such a declaration.

**§ 206.32 Definitions.**

All definitions in the Stafford Act and in § 206.2 apply. In addition, the following definitions apply:

(a) *Appeal:* A request for reconsideration of a determination on any action related to Federal assistance under the Stafford Act and these regulations. Specific procedures for appeals are contained in the relevant subparts of these regulations.

(b) *Commitment:* A certification by the Governor that the State and local governments will expend a reasonable amount of funds to alleviate the effects of the major disaster or emergency, for which no Federal reimbursement will be requested.

(c) *Disaster Application Center:* A center established in a centralized location within the disaster area for individuals, families, or businesses to apply for disaster aid.

(d) *FEMA-State Agreement:* A formal legal document stating the understandings, commitments, and binding conditions for assistance applicable as the result of the major disaster or emergency declared by the President.

(e) *Incident:* Any condition which meets the definition of major disaster or emergency as set forth in § 206.2 which causes damage or hardship that may result in a Presidential declaration of a major disaster or an emergency.

(f) *Incident period:* The time interval during which the disaster-causing incident occurs. No Federal assistance under the Act shall be approved unless the damage or hardship to be alleviated resulted from the disaster-causing incident which took place during the incident period or was in anticipation of that incident. The incident period will be established by FEMA in the FEMA-State Agreement and published in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

**§ 206.33 Preliminary damage assessment.**

The preliminary damage assessment (PDA) process is a mechanism used to determine the impact and magnitude of damage and the resulting unmet needs of individuals, businesses, the

public sector, and the community as a whole. Information collected is used by the State as a basis for the Governor's request, and by FEMA to document the recommendation made to the President in response to the Governor's request. It is in the best interest of all parties to combine State and Federal personnel resources by performing a joint PDA prior to the initiation of a Governor's request, as follows.

(a) *Preassessment by the State.* When an incident occurs, or is imminent, which the State official responsible for disaster operations determines may be beyond the State and local government capabilities to respond, the State will request the Regional Director to perform a joint FEMA-State preliminary damage assessment. It is not anticipated that all occurrences will result in the requirement for assistance; therefore, the State will be expected to verify their initial information, in some manner, before requesting this support.

(b) *Damage assessment teams.* Damage assessment teams will be composed of at least one representative of the Federal Government and one representative of the State. A local government representative, familiar with the extent and location of damage in his/her community, should also be included, if possible. Other State and Federal agencies, and voluntary relief organizations may also be asked to participate, as needed. It is the State's responsibility to coordinate State and local participation in the PDA and to ensure that the participants receive timely notification concerning the schedule. A FEMA official will brief team members on damage criteria, the kind of information to be collected for the particular incident, and reporting requirements.

(c) *Review of findings.* At the close of the PDA, FEMA will consult with State officials to discuss findings and reconcile any differences.

(d) *Exceptions.* The requirement for a joint PDA may be waived for those incidents of unusual severity and magnitude that do not require field damage assessments to determine the need for supplemental Federal assistance under the Act, or in such other instances determined by the Regional Director

upon consultation with the State. It may be necessary, however, to conduct an assessment to determine unmet needs for managerial response purposes.

**§206.34 Request for utilization of Department of Defense (DOD) resources.**

(a) *General.* During the immediate aftermath of an incident which may ultimately qualify for a Presidential declaration of a major disaster or emergency, when threats to life and property are present which cannot be effectively dealt with by the State or local governments, the Associate Director may direct DOD to utilize DOD personnel and equipment for removal of debris and wreckage and temporary restoration of essential public facilities and services.

(b) *Request process.* The Governor of a State, or the Acting Governor in his/her absence, may request such DOD assistance. The Governor should submit the request to the Associate Director through the appropriate Regional Director to ensure prompt acknowledgment and processing. The request must be submitted within 48 hours of the occurrence of the incident. Requests made after that time may still be considered if information is submitted indicating why the request for assistance could not be made during the initial 48 hours. The request shall include:

(1) Information describing the types and amount of DOD emergency assistance being requested;

(2) Confirmation that the Governor has taken appropriate action under State law and directed the execution of the State emergency plan;

(3) A finding that the situation is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and affected local governments and that Federal assistance is necessary for the preservation of life and property;

(4) A certification by the Governor that the State and local government will reimburse FEMA for the non-Federal share of the cost of such work; and

(5) An agreement: