



MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE	3
OFFICE OF PREPAREDNESS	4
OFFICE OF RESPONSE	8
OFFICE OF LOGISTICS	10
OFFICE OF MITIGATION	13
OFFICE OF HOUSING AND INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE	16
OFFICE OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE	20
OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES	24
OFFICE OF FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING	25
MEMA INFORMATION	
TECHNOLOGY SERVICES (MITS)	30
MS BUSINESS EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER(MSBEOC)	32
OFFICE OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS	34

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR STEPHEN C. McCRANEY



Each year, Mississippi is plagued with several storms, many of which do not lead to a declared disaster but test our abilities, resources, and procedures. They also erode our infrastructure day in and day out. Our critical infrastructure, such as water systems, power grids, roads, bridges, and dams, is challenged in every thunderstorm, flood, hurricane, and tornado. As it bears the brunt of straight-line winds and rain, our aging infrastructure is slowly deteriorating from Mother Nature's wear and tear.

This administration encourages mitigation efforts across the state and local jurisdictions. The time to mitigate a potential dam failure or a water system outage is now. These weakening systems are decades older, and with our increasingly hazardous weather conditions, it's only a matter of time before our state sees a significant infrastructure failure. A failure of critical infrastructure not only impedes a community from recovery, but it is also life-threatening.

Hurricane Katrina and the residual mitigation funding made available afterward to the Mississippi Gulf Coast have, in turn, paid dividends to our state and coastline. Because of the investment in hardening structures and elevating properties, we've withstood many of the powerful hurricanes since 2005.

The benefits of investing in mitigation projects are life safety, property protection, and a quicker return to businesses opening and restimulating the local economy after a disaster.

Investing in mitigation will require commitments from local and state governments.

We are pushing for legislative support to provide additional funding for local and state Mitigation projects statewide.

While the state continues to bolster its resilience and response efforts to natural disasters, citizens must also be educated. At the state and local level, we must continue to prepare every Mississippian for the next disaster. From those medically dependent, young and old, we have multiple vulnerable populations across the state, and MEMA strives to include all audiences in our preparedness messaging. We do so during "blue sky days," not just during storm prep.

This annual report is a testament to the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency staff and a promise to the citizens that we will continue to get better after each disaster to best serve them on their worst days.

OFFICE OF PREPAREDNESS

The mission of the Office of Preparedness is to utilize the “whole community approach” to ensure all citizens of the State of Mississippi are prepared on all levels to meet the five mission areas of the National Preparedness Goal: Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery. The intent is to increase awareness and resiliency across the state while addressing the thirty-two core capabilities that address the greatest risk to the State of Mississippi.

The Office of Preparedness consists of one Office Director, three (3) Program Management Specialist Team Leads, a Program Specialist IV, 14 Preparedness Officers, and an Administrative Support Assistant.

The Office of Preparedness focuses on planning, training, and exercise programs for local, state, and tribal emergency managers. The office operates with a regional concept offering preparedness efforts in the Northern, Central, and Southern regions. The Office of Preparedness is responsible for coordinating planning efforts, training on state and federal-level courses, and conducting and facilitating exercises. Additionally, the Office of Preparedness supports the activation of the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) and the Command and General Staff (C&GS) by providing the Planning Section Chief (PSC) and the planning cell.



(Radiological Program Manager Sierra Esco and Response Director Les Stapp during Radiological Training)

All these efforts are directed at preparing local communities with effective planning tools utilizing an all-hazards approach. Each office provides guidance on specific plans, including but not limited to:

- **Northern Region:** Focuses on Earthquake preparedness as specified in the Earthquake Incident Annex, as well as continuity of operations planning as specified in the Continuity of Operations Plan.
- **Central Region:** Focuses on radiological incidents including Radiological Emergency Preparedness (REP) and the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) as specified in the Nuclear-Radiological Incident Annex;
- **Southern Region:** Focuses on Hurricane preparedness as specified in the Hurricane Incident Annex;
- **Preparedness Division:** Focuses on Preparedness Officer training, plans, and programs, such as the State of Mississippi Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans (CEMP) as well as tracking and documenting the efforts of planning, training, and exercise performance for recipients of the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG).

Planning

The Office of Preparedness is responsible for maintaining state-level emergency operations plans, maintaining preparedness programs, and assisting local jurisdictions in whole community all-hazards planning initiatives to ensure the preparedness and resilience of the State before and after a disaster.

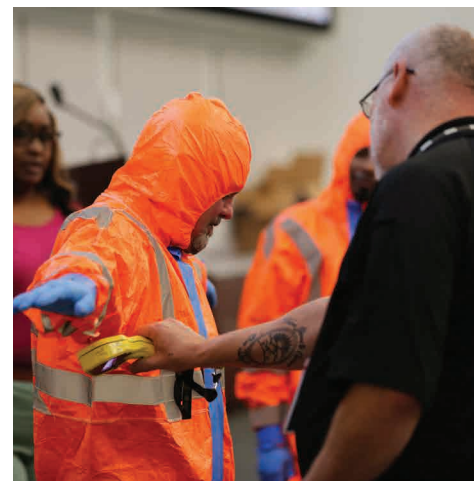
- Provided planning support for FEMA-DR-4697
- Provided planning support for FEMA-DR-4727
- Participated in the National Emergency Management Association’s planning meeting
- Participated in Grand Gulf Nuclear Station’s Hostile Action Based Full-scale Exercise planning meetings
- Coordinated the ongoing development of the Critical Transportation Needs/Transportation Management Services Earthquake Evacuation Plan
- Participated in the MEMA Strategic Plan planning process
- Conducted Integrated Preparedness Planning Workshops for local, state, and tribal emergency managers
- Assisted the Mississippi Office of Homeland Security Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment/Stakeholder Preparedness Review process
- Continued the development of the Personnel Qualification System for the deployment of emergency personnel
- Assisted with the conduct of the Mississippi/Alabama Hurricane Evacuation Study
- Coordinated statewide participation in the 2023 Great ShakeOut Earthquake Drill
- Participated in the Interagency Coordinating Committee on Hurricanes
- Participated in the FEMA Region IV Integrated Preparedness Planning Workshop
- Attended the Southern States Energy Board Conference
- Attended the National Earthquake Manager’s Conference

Training

Training courses are delivered to local emergency managers, first responders, state agencies, volunteer organizations, tribal communities, and universities. The training provided is structured to meet the needs of a diverse audience while emphasizing the collaboration between separate organizations in all-hazards response and recovery operations to save lives and protect property. Importance is placed on governing doctrines, such as the National Response Framework (NRF), National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF), National Incident Management System (NIMS), the National Preparedness Goal (NPG), and the Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP).

MEMA’s training programs offer courses in the following categories:

- Emergency Planning
- Basic Emergency Management
- Mitigation
- Preparedness
- Incident Command
- Response and Recovery
- Communication
- All-Hazard Position Specific Courses
- Radiological Emergency Preparedness
- Damage Assessment/Crisis Track Training



(Preparedness hosting Radiological Training)

Mississippi’s State Training Officer oversees enrollment in Mississippi for students requesting to attend courses at the Emergency Management Institute in Emmitsburg, MD, where more than 400 courses in emergency management are offered.

STATE-LEVEL COURSES DELIVERED FOR FY 2024

Date	Total Personnel Trained	Total Number of Courses
July 1 - September 2023	200	13
October 1 - December 2023	314	13
January 1 - March 2024	307	18
April 1 - June 2024	272	16

Exercise

The Office of Preparedness works with federal, tribal, state, and local partner agencies and stakeholders to design, coordinate, and facilitate exercises that validate emergency planning efforts and identify training needs to promote and support a culture of preparedness for the whole community.

All exercises are aligned with exercise objectives. The mission areas and core capabilities are identified in the NPG. The exercises support training in accordance with NIMS while identifying improvement planning opportunities with HSEEP guidance.

Furthermore, exercises are coordinated with federal, state, and local partners to develop and implement the Office of Preparedness Integrated Preparedness Planning Workshop (IPPW). The Office of Preparedness attended and observed many local exercises as well as participated in the following exercises:

- Radiological Emergency Program Mock Drill
- The Great ShakeOut Earthquake Exercise
- State Tornado Drill
- MEMA ICS Process Functional Exercise
- MEMA ICS Documentation Functional Exercise
- Mississippi National Guard’s Hurricane Tabletop Exercise
- MEMA Hurricane Tabletop Exercise



(Preparedness Officer Zachary Evans teaching a class)

EXERCISES FOR FY 24

Date	Total Number of Exercises
July 1 - September 2023	5
October 1- December 2023	8
January 1 - March 2024	8
April 1 - June 2024	9



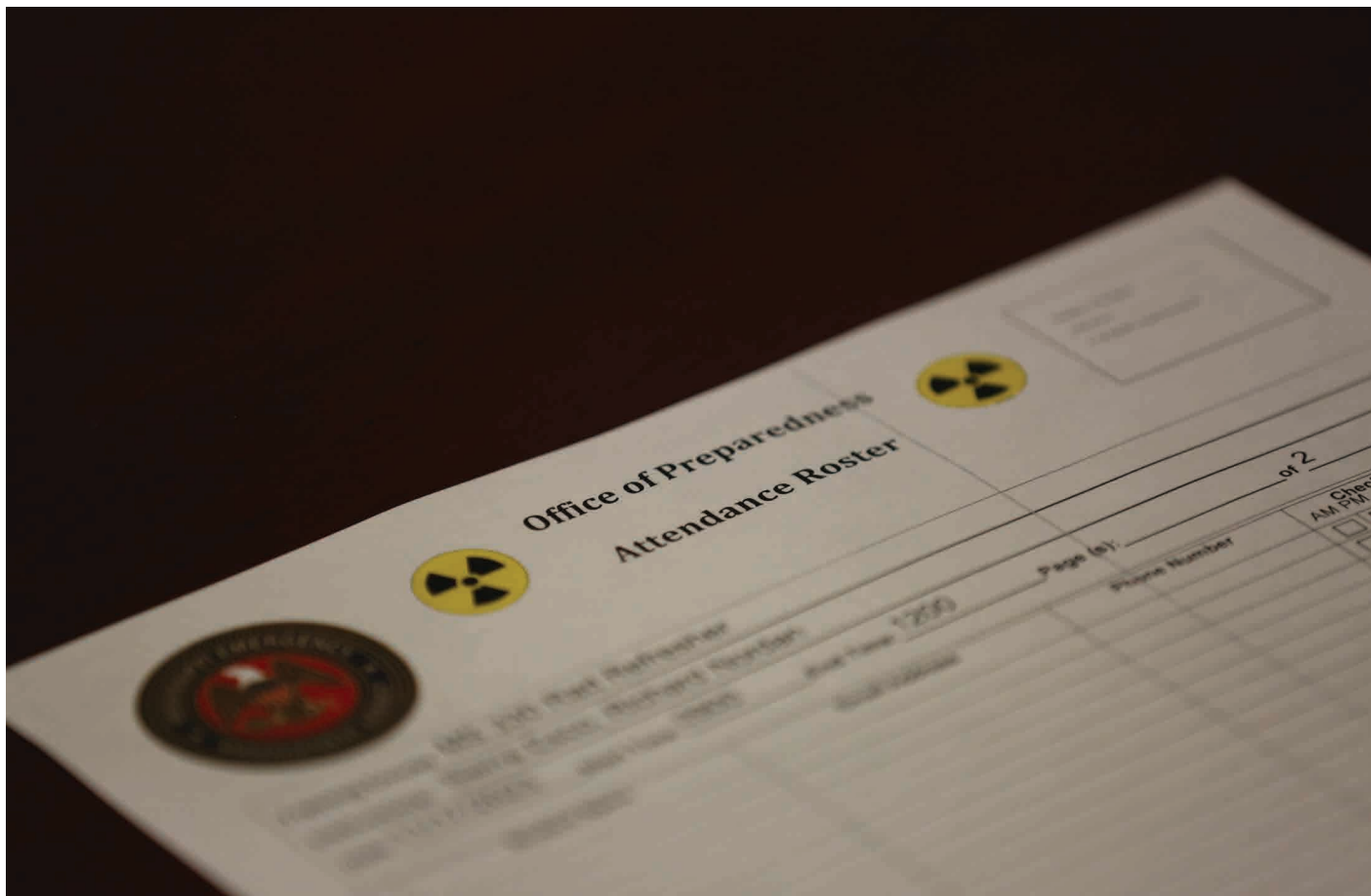
(Bureau Director Susan Hardy teaching a class)

Radiological Preparedness and Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Program

The Office of Preparedness Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program (REP), which encompasses the MREPP and WIPP, provided training and exercises to state and local first responders, Level VI radiological transportation inspectors, and volunteers. WIPP manages radiological transportation permits for transporting radiological materials within the State of Mississippi. A wide variety of radiological training was offered and exercises to prepare, prevent, protect, mitigate, respond, and recover from the potentially harmful effects of radiation and the risks associated with the transportation of radiological materials across the state. Training opportunities include:

- Refresher for Radiological Response
- Equipment Training
- Pre-Hospital Transport of Contaminated Patients
- Reception and Congregate Care of Evacuees
- Bus Driver Dosimetry
- Safety Officer Training
- Transportation Training
- Modular Emergency Response Radiological Training

Date	Total Participants	Total Number of REP Training Events
July 1 - September 2023	46	3
October 1 - December 2023	146	6



(Sign-up sheet for Radiological Training)

OFFICE OF RESPONSE

The Office of Response provides the core, coordinated state of operational response capability needed to save and sustain lives, minimize suffering, and protect property in a timely and effective manner in communities that have become overwhelmed by natural disasters, acts of terrorism, or other emergencies. The Office of Response is comprised of Operations, Field Services, the Mutual Aid Program, and the Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Program; and is responsible for generating state information, warnings, and alerts, coordinating response efforts, and staffing the State Emergency Operations Center.

The following chart shows events and activations that MEMA worked in FY 2024.

Event	Date	Activation Level
Flash Flooding	July 13, 2023	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Wildfires	August 1 - November 14, 2023	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Severe Weather	September 6, 2023	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Severe Weather	November 20-21, 2023	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Severe Weather	January 8-9, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Severe Weather	January 12, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Winter Weather	January 14-22, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Winter Weather	January 18, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Flash Flooding	January 23-26, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Severe Weather	March 8-9, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Severe Weather	March 14-15, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Severe Weather	March 25-26, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Severe Weather	April 8-11, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation) FEMA DR-4790
Severe Weather	April 18-19, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Severe Weather	May 7-9, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Severe Weather	May 9-10, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Severe Weather	May 12-13, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Severe Weather	May 16-17, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Severe Weather	May 22-24, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Severe Weather	May 31-June 1, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Severe Weather	June 5, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)
Severe Weather	June 9, 2024	SEOC Level 2 (Partial Activation)

Number Of EOC Activations (Total: 22)

Incidents Reported to the State Warning Point **(Total: 2,652)**

- Hazardous Material Incidents: **355**
- Train Incidents: **27**
- Aircraft Incidents: **7**
- Maritime Incidents: **2**

Number of phone calls received at the State Warning Point: **(Total: 5,126)**

- UAS Missions Total: **46**
- Damage Assessment Missions: **10**
- Search and Rescue Missions: **33**
- Persons Found: **21**
- Law Enforcement Support: **2**
- Hazardous Material Missions: **3**

Total Flight UAS Breakdown:

- **267** Flights
- **347** Hours Flown

EMAC Missions – **1**

- Wildfire support to the State of Louisiana



(Area Coordinators pose for a group photo in April 2024)

OFFICE OF LOGISTICS

The Office of Logistics consists of four branches, Property, Fleet, Facilities, and State Emergency Logistical Operations Center (SELOC), with 14 personnel. The property branch manages over 2,678 property items valued at over \$28,344,483.00 assigned to the MEMA staff. The fleet branch manages 57 state-owned vehicles, and the average age of the fleet is seven years, for a total of 4,305,407 miles. The vehicles have an average of 75,533 miles per vehicle. Also, the FY 24 accumulated mileage of 581,103 for an average of 10,195 per vehicle. The facilities branch manages and maintains the State Emergency Operation Center with 75,000 square feet and the SELOC with 112,000 square feet of office and warehouse space. Logistics responded and supported the local government with resources during two major federal declarations.

MEMA Logistics supported Hinds County EMA and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) during DR 4790. MEMA provided and maintained a 19x35 climate-controlled Western Shelter Tent to support Individual Assistance at Smith Wills Stadium. Logistics also supported two other disaster recovery center (DRC) locations with water, coolers, ice, and other various cooling systems.

Throughout the fiscal year, the Office of Logistics supported several non-federally declared disasters. We supported the Mississippi State Forestry Commission with bottled water and shelf-stable meals during the drought-produced wildfires between August – September 2023.



(Day to day operations at the State Emergency Logistical Operations Center (SELOC))

MEMA also provided life-sustaining bottled water to Wayne County, Hiwannee Water Association during the winter weather event of January 2024, and Sunflower County, Doddsville Water Association in May of 2024 when each system experienced a catastrophic loss of water pressure, which resulted in no water for the supported residence.

When the State Emergency Operations Center is not activated, MEMA staff are constantly training for the next disaster. MEMA Logistics conducted a Logistics Summit at the Combat Readiness Training Center, April 17-19, 2024, with local, federal, state, and private sector partners in preparation for hurricane season.



(Logistics Director Don Wilson speaking during the Logistic Summit)

State Emergency Logistical Operations Center (SELOC) and COVID and Logistics Operations FY 2024:

The 103,000-square-foot climate-controlled warehouse houses the State Pandemic Stockpile. It supports COVID-19 response activities, including, but not limited to, the storage and distribution of PPE and Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) test sets across the state.

The SELOC houses more than 3,100 pallets of commodities and resources, with an estimated cost of over \$20,000,000. These resources include PPE (gloves, gowns, face shields, masks, bouffant caps, and shoe covers), disinfectant wipes and cleaners, body bags, testing supplies, fans, heaters, equipment, and coolers. Most of these items are part of the state pandemic stockpile and are available at a moment's notice for deployment. We also provide space to the MSDH to store pandemic response materials and commodities.

COVID logistical operations over the last year supported responders, schools, long-term care facilities, government and non-government organizations, and MSDH testing efforts. During this period, the COVID Joint Logistics section, led by MEMA, shipped 830,523 items across the state.

In addition to the COVID-19 mission, the SELOC has supported numerous other events impacting the state, including several severe weather outbreaks and an active wildfire season. Through these events, the facility supported Responders in the COVID-19 environment by providing water, Shelf Stable Meals, sandbags, and tarps.

SELOC COVID Operations (Fiscal Year 24):

- Items Deployed: 830,523
- Total Deliveries: 123

COVID-19

PPE Supplies	Total Distribution
Disinfectant - Spray - 19oz	84
Gloves - Exam - Nitrile - Large - Non-powder	46,000
Gloves - Exam - Nitrile - Medium - Non-powder	300,000
Gown - Isolation - Level 2 - Large	100
Test Kit	222,577
Test Tube	65,650
Thermometer - No Touch	52
Mask - Procedure	196,000
Wipe - 75 Count	60
TOTAL	830,523



(Logistics Director Don Wilson and Dennis Stewart preparing sandbags)

EVENTS

MFC WILDFIRE COORDINATION 2023	
Bottled Water	32,256
Meals	312
WW JAN 14-22, 2024	
Bottled Water	36,288
Hospital Blankets	100
SW MARCH 14-15, 2024	
Tarps	150
DR-4790 SW APRIL 8-11, 2024	
Bottled Water	4,032
Disinfectant - Spray - 19oz	12
Sand Bags	60,000
Tarps	190
Wipes - 75 Count	6
SW MAY 9-10, 2024	
Tarps	30
SW MAY 12-13, 2024	
Bottled Water	6,048
Tarps	60
SW JUNE 3-4, 2024	
Tarps	24
TOTALS	
Bottled Water	78,624
Disinfectant - Spray - 19oz	12
Hospital Blankets	100
Meals	312
Sand Bags	60,000
Tarps	454
Wipes - 75 Count	6
	139,508

OFFICE OF MITIGATION



(Floodplain Management Specialist Jonathan Hughes discussing Floodplain Management)

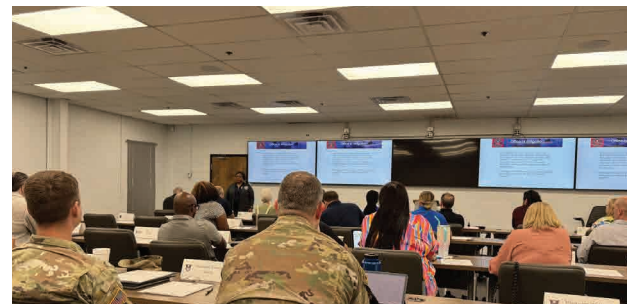
Mitigation is the cornerstone of emergency management. Its primary intent is to ensure that fewer communities and individuals become victims of disasters. The goal of mitigation is to create economically secure, socially stable, better-built, and more environmentally sound communities that are out of harm's way.

The Mitigation Office administers hazard mitigation grant programs to state and local governments, qualifying nonprofits, and tribal organizations. Grant programs include the post-disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program (FMA), which funds the mitigation of high-loss insured properties through the National Flood Insurance Program and the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant.

The Hazard Mitigation Planning Bureau is responsible for assisting local jurisdictions with the development and update of hazard mitigation plans. The Bureau is also responsible for developing, maintaining, and updating the State of Mississippi Hazard Mitigation Plan. It encourages the development of long-term mitigation strategies that improve resiliency.

Mitigation by the Numbers

- 76 Counties have approved plans
- 6 Counties in approved pending adoption status
- 364 Jurisdictions have approved plans
- 21 Jurisdictions in approved pending adoption status
- 6 Plans are expired, and all are colleges
- Plan approval percentage is 93.09%



(Mitigation Director Jana Henderson speaking during EOC meeting)

The Hazard Mitigation Grants Bureau administers FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grants. These include competitive and non-competitive grants available statewide to local governments that have an approved Hazard Mitigation Plan and participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.

- Open Disaster: **16**
- Closed Disaster: **2**
- Approved Projects totaling: **\$19,329,053.97**
- Federal Funds Obligated: **\$5,302,032.30**
- Managing Open Project: **103**
- Payments Made Totaling: **\$4 million**
- SWIFT Project Approved Totaling: **\$1,750,092.06**
- BRIC Projects Approved totaling: **\$2,332,500**
- Closed Projects to date totaling: **Over \$700 thousand**



(Floodplain Managers at a booth during the Association of Floodplain Management Conference)

Communities that participate in the National Flood Insurance Program are provided technical assistance and community audits by the Floodplain Management Bureau staff.

Floodplain Management

- NFIP communities participating: **335**
- CRS communities participating: **29**
- Average Savings Per Policy in CRS Community: **\$68.00**
- Total CRS Community Savings: **\$2,308,657.00**
- Policies in Force: **42,214**
- Total Insurance Coverage: **11,632,478,000.00**
- Flood Insurance Claims to Date in MS: **65,411**
- Flood Insurance Payout to Date: **3,126,469,258.00**

Floodplain Staff Performance

- Community Assistance Visits: **59**
- Community Assistance Visits Closed: **8**
- Number of Regulatory Ordinances Reviewed: **9**
- Communities Adopting Ordinances: **2**
- Floodplain Determination Letters: **63**
- Technical Assistance Visits /Contacts: **213**
- Community Assistance Contacts: **52**
- Floodplain Workshops Conducted: **4**



(Safe room Coordinator Kevin Wade inspecting a safe room)

Safe Rooms

The Residential Safe Room Grant Program is a crucial initiative administered by the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) to protect the citizens of Mississippi from the devastating impacts of severe weather events, particularly tornadoes. Funded through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), this pilot program offered homeowners financial assistance for installing properly designed safe rooms, significantly enhancing personal safety and community resilience across the state. By incentivizing the installation of residential safe rooms, MEMA is actively contributing to the reduction of tornado-related injuries and fatalities, particularly in rural areas where access to community shelters is limited. As the program grows, additional approvals and safe room installations are anticipated, further expanding its protective reach.

Applications Submitted:

- Over 850 applications were received during the initial application period.
- 526 completed applications have been submitted to FEMA requesting approval.

County Breakdown of Applicants:

- Clay County: **78**
- Humphreys County: **6**
- Issaquena County: **1**
- Lowndes County: **179**
- Monroe County: **480**
- Sharkey County: **3**
- Warren County: **44**
- Yazoo County: **60**

Site Visits Conducted:

- MEMA representatives have conducted 648 site visits across the state, collecting necessary data and assisting applicants in navigating the program’s requirements.

Applications Approved:

- **155** applicants have been approved for reimbursement so far, with more approvals expected as the program progresses.

Installed Safe Rooms:

- **92** safe rooms have been successfully installed and inspected by MEMA representatives, with more installations expected as approvals continue.
- **79** of these installations have already been reimbursed, with additional reimbursements anticipated as more safe rooms are completed.

County Breakdown of Installed Safe Rooms:

- Monroe County: **111**
- Lowndes County: **15**
- Clay County: **13**
- Yazoo County: **13**
- Warren County: **3**

Community Impact:

- The program has significantly raised awareness about the importance of properly designed safe rooms, encouraging more residents to consider this life-saving investment.



(Safe room Coordinator Kevin Wade inspecting a safe room)

OFFICE OF HOUSING AND INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE

Severe weather events do not discriminate; therefore, communities may still be recovering from one disaster when another occurs. For example, Humphreys County residents were impacted by two disasters, one in March 2023 and another in April 2024, within 13 months. (See chart below).

This fiscal year, the Office of Housing and Individual Assistance (OHIA) continued to work with FEMA on the recovery efforts of two presidentially declared disasters from Fiscal Year 2023 (DR 4697 and DR 4727).

OHIA also began working with FEMA after the April 8 -11, 2024, severe storm system, which resulted in an Individual Assistance (IA) declaration on June 10, 2024 (DR 4790). Combined, these three disasters impacted 14 IA-declared counties. (See chart below.)

DECLARATION NUMBER	4697	4727	4790
Incident Period	March 24-25, 2023	June 14-19, 2023	April 8-11, 2024
Declaration Date	March 26, 2023	August 12, 2023	June 10, 2024
	Sharkey	Jackson	Humphreys
	Humphreys	Jasper	Hinds
	Carroll		Madison
	Monroe		Scott
	Panola		Neshoba
	Montgomery		Hancock
	*Washington		

*** Public Assistance Declared**

Recovery is an interdependent process in which response, rebuilding, and mitigation often overlap. New disasters may disrupt or reset progress, requiring flexible, adaptive approaches. Just as no two communities are the same, no two recovery efforts will be the same. Therefore, one of our biggest challenges is to help communities identify resources to address their recovery needs, priorities, goals, and objectives. The activities below highlight efforts that reflect this office’s commitment to helping impacted communities on their road to recovery.



(MEMA employees working at a Disaster Recovery Center)

Non-Congregate Shelters (NCS)

In response to the March 2023 tornadoes, the State utilized Non-Congregate Shelters; hotels to house residents displaced during DR 4697. At its peak, more than 760 people were housed in 47 shelters (hotels) in NCS. By July 2023, the program had 265 occupants in eight shelters. Most survivors in NCS left the program when their FEMA housing options became available or found permanent housing solutions. In April 2024, the last occupant left NCS, and the program closed. Through case management, MEMA identified 75 clients who were no longer eligible for the NCS program.

State-Led Disaster Housing Task Force

From **July 2023** to **June 2024**, 24 Disaster Housing Task Force (DHTF) meetings were held addressing housing issues and unmet needs from the three federally declared disasters. Some of the DHTF partners included representatives from the impacted counties, federal and state agencies, non-profit organizations, and Mississippi’s Congressional delegation representatives.



(Individual Assistance Bureau Director Denise Gray-Hunt doing damage assessments)

Direct Housing

In **July 2023**, 20 individuals displaced from their homes due to the March 2023 tornadoes were placed into units as part of FEMA’s Direct Housing Program. As of **June 2024**, 291 individuals were housed in FEMA units, with several families choosing to purchase their units. OHIA continues to work with Disaster Case Management, FEMA, Long-Term Recovery Committees, and non-profit organizations to identify other safe and affordable housing solutions for families who do not have a permanent housing plan.

Damage Assessment Validations

As part of the joint Crisis Track/Damage Assessment training, IA Specialists provided an overview of the validation process and explained how it can sometimes result in a federal declaration. From July 2023 to June 2024, the IA Specialists conducted 12 Damage Assessment Validation Training Courses in the state’s nine emergency management districts. The staff also completed validation assessments on 553 homes in 11 counties resulting in a federal declaration in six counties. (DR 4790)

Office Of Housing and Individual Assistance By-The-Numbers July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024	
Damage Assessment Validations:	553
Site Inspections:	8
Disaster Housing Task Force Meetings:	24
Non-Congregate Shelter Meetings:	73
Individual Assistance and Disability Integration District Meeting Trainings:	15
OHIA Awareness Courses:	4
Monitoring Visits:	83
FEMA Direct Housing Meetings:	153
Disability Integration Meetings:	25

Addressing Unmet Needs

Throughout this fiscal year, OHIA received 106 documented calls from disaster survivors who lacked personal funds and were not covered by insurance or existing assistance programs. OHIA provides referrals to partner organizations that can assist in meeting the survivors' unmet needs.

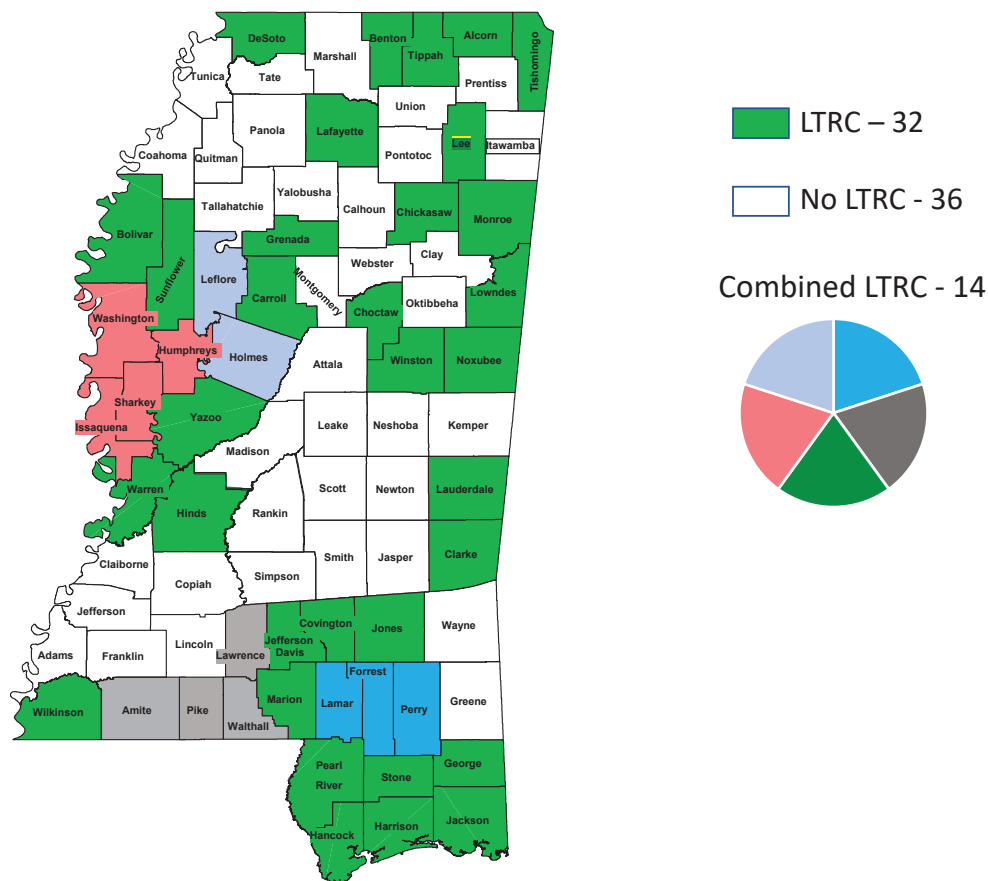
Disability Integration

Disability Integration (DI) is another crucial part of the recovery phase. During this fiscal year, the DI staff created an accessibility checklist that aligns with FEMA assessment procedures and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. In response to DR-4790, Disability Integration used the checklist to assess eight Disaster Recovery Center locations. Additionally, Disability Integration introduced ways to mitigate resource needs that may result prior to and after a disaster by implementing the CMIST (Communication, Maintaining Health, Independence, Support Services & Safety, and Transportation) resource memory tool.

Pre-Disaster Activities

Understanding that preparedness is critical to a successful recovery, this office completed several pre-disaster activities during this fiscal year.

- **County Profiles** – These profiles provide a select compilation of demographic and economic indicators, including data sets such as expected annual loss due to natural disasters, disability/access and functional needs population, housing demographics, social vulnerability, and community resilience. OHIA created profiles on all 82 Mississippi counties and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.
- **Long-Term Recovery Committees**—Individual Assistance Specialists assist counties with establishing a Long-Term Recovery Committee that reflects the community's local needs, available resources, cultural diversity, and leadership style. Currently, there are 46 active LTRCs in the state. During FY24, OHIA helped establish an LTRC in Monroe County.



- **Technical Assistance**—Individual Assistance Specialists conduct quarterly Monitoring Visits with county Emergency Management Directors to provide a face-to-face opportunity to ask questions, receive updates on recovery, and address unmet needs. This year, more than 83 monitoring visits were conducted in 8 districts.
- **OHIA Awareness Courses**—This fiscal year, OHIA developed four new courses designed to provide foundational knowledge about Individual Assistance, Disability Integration, and Disaster Housing and help participants better understand certain aspects of the recovery process.
 - ◇ Disaster Recovery Centers: The Role of the DRCs in Recovery
 - ◇ Long-Term Recovery Centers: How LTRCs Benefit a Community after a Disaster
 - ◇ Integrating Individuals with Disabilities and Access and Functional Needs into Emergency Management
 - ◇ Disaster Housing Overview: From Shelters to Permanent Housing

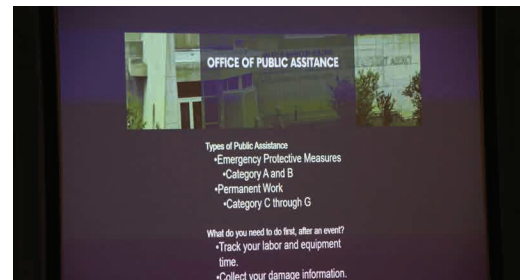


(Drone photo of damage in Hinds County)

OFFICE OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

The Office of Public Assistance administers the Public Assistance Grant Program (PA). The office provides grants to assist eligible applicants to build back after a Major Disaster Declaration through a partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Not only does the Public Assistance Grant Program provide funding for the repair/replacement of damaged publicly owned property, but it also provides additional funding for the hardening of those facilities with mitigation monies to be more resilient for the next event. PA proudly works hand in hand with our state and local governmental agencies to secure all the federal funding, post-catastrophic events, the agency is legally able to receive.

- Disasters opened FY24- 0
- Projects opened FY24- 288
- Disasters closed FY24- 2
- Projects closed FY24- 390
- Disasters working FY24- 20
- Amount of money obligated FY24- \$ 133,707,934.28
- Payments made FY24 for all projects/disasters- \$157,485,298.92



(Slide during Public Assistance presentation)



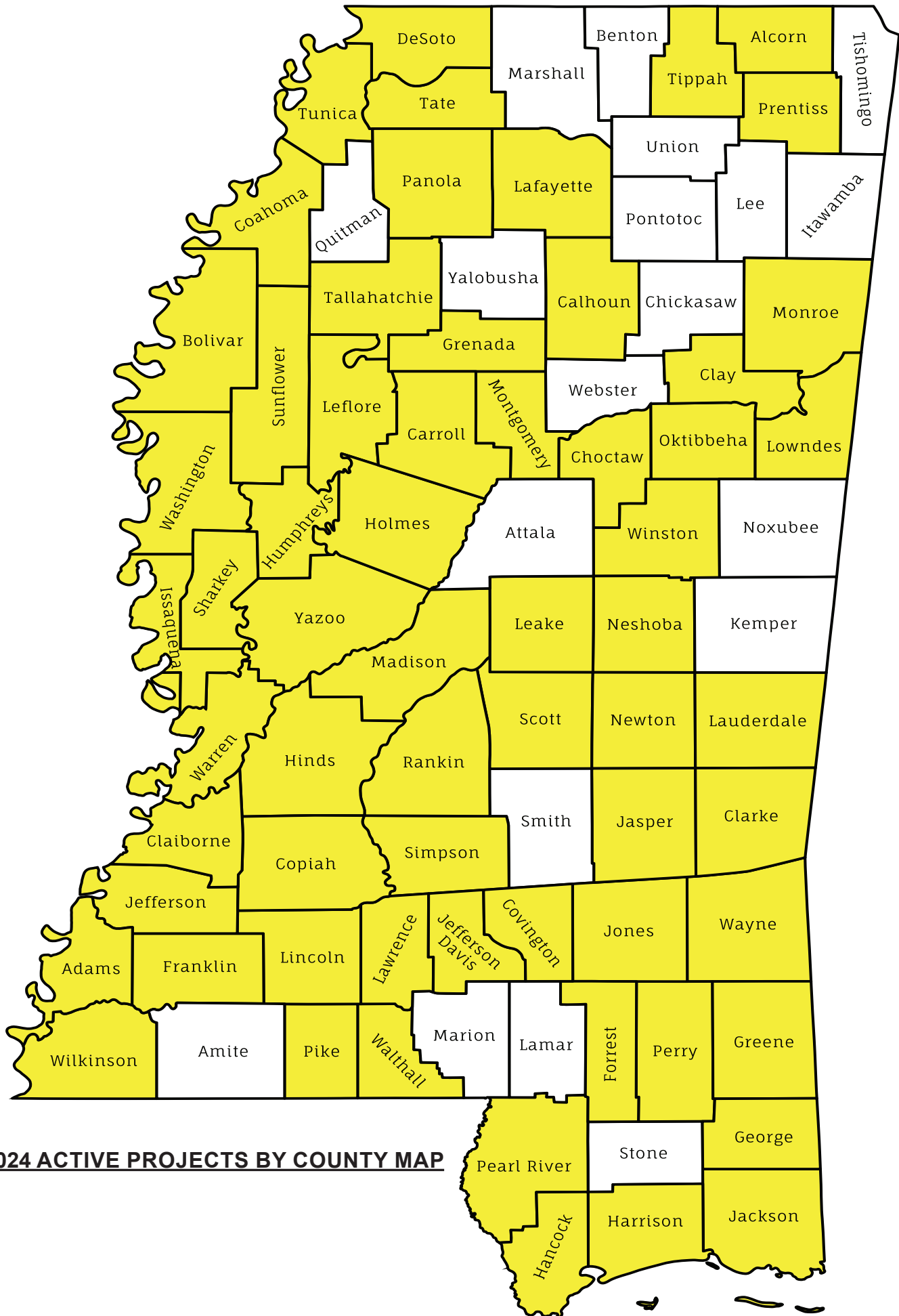
(Public Assistance Director Mike Siler doing a presentation)

FY 2024 ACTIVE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROJECTS BY COUNTY

COUNTY	PROJECTS
Adams	6
Alcorn	5
Bolivar	3
Calhoun	3
Carroll	11
Choctaw	1
Claiborne	1
Clarke	2
Clay	14
Coahoma	2
Copiah	4
Covington	8
Desoto	1
Forrest	19
Franklin	1
George	23
Greene	1
Grenada	3
Hancock	49
Harrison	225
Hinds	63
Holmes	13
Humphreys	29
Issaquena	2
Jackson	53
Jasper	1
Jefferson	3
Jefferson Davis	1
Jones	10
Lafayette	17
Lauderdale	6
Lawrence	1
Leake	2
Leflore	2

FY 2024 ACTIVE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROJECTS BY COUNTY

COUNTY	PROJECTS
Lincoln	12
Lowndes	3
Madison	3
Monroe	69
Montgomery	10
Neshoba	11
Newton	5
Okitbbeha	4
Panola	10
Pearl River	5
Perry	1
Pike	2
Prentiss	1
Rankin	4
Scott	4
Sharkey	62
Simpson	2
Sunflower	6
Tallahatchie	3
Tate	1
Tippah	3
Tunica	5
Walthall	2
Warren	19
Washington	3
Wayne	27
Wilkinson	7
Winston	2
Yazoo	2
Subtotal	873
State Agency	318
Total	1,191



FY 2024 ACTIVE PROJECTS BY COUNTY MAP

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

The Office of Human Resources is comprised of Human Resources, the Payroll/Travel Division, and the Disaster Reservist Program. The Office of Human Resources is responsible for managing the life cycle of employee processes through planning, directing, and coordinating activities that address employee needs as well as the needs of the agency. We strive to provide quality programs and services that support, enable, and empower a talented MEMA workforce located in Pearl, Byram and Biloxi.

The nature of our responsibility is developing and overseeing benefit programs, recruitment and selection processes, classification and compensation, time reconciliation, payroll and travel management, administrative support, employee professional development, and performance, effectively interpreting and enforcing policies and procedures as set forth by the agency and managing the agency's Disaster Reservist program.

In FY24, **49** new hires attended New Hire Orientation/Onboarding classes. The Office of Human Resources conducts orientation every 1st and 16th of each month if needed, to fill vacancies in various departments throughout the agency. In addition, the department is responsible for coordinating the agency's annual Open Enrollment in the month of October for all three MEMA locations. The Open Enrollment period allows the employees the opportunity to view their current benefit selections and make changes for the next calendar year. During Open Enrollment, the employees can meet face-to-face with Human Resources and Benefit Representatives regarding questions and/or concerns regarding their benefits. A Wellness Fair is held each year during the agency's annual Open Enrollment to provide flu vaccines, health screenings, and educational material to promote a culture of health and well-being throughout the agency

Payroll/Travel Division

The Payroll and Travel Division manages and oversees functions associated with the agency Payroll and Travel department. The Payroll and Travel Division is responsible for processing Monthly (M), Supplemental (S), Travel (T), and Contract Payrolls (K), verification of the payroll (M, S, T & C), reconciliation of UMB (agency credit card) billing, account distributions, reconciliation of BCBS (health and life insurance), dental and vision billing, and separations/leave transfers/payouts.

Disaster Reservist Program

The Disaster Reservist program was created to provide a corps of trained and experienced Mississippians who can be activated on an as-needed basis to meet staffing needs during emergencies. The program has a database of individuals with skills and experience that may be used during disasters. Disaster Reservists may include individuals with logistics, public information, public works, and other skillsets. Individuals may also be retired from government or private industry careers and are available to enter a contract once a disaster or emergency occurs. Once a reservist is on active-duty status, he or she will become a contract employee of MEMA for the duration of their deployment or mission assignment. Reservist pay is based on training, skills, and experience.

During FY24, one reservist was utilized to assist the Office of Mitigation with their Safe Room program. The reservist worked one mission of 966.50 hours, assisting Mitigation with DR 4429-MS Flood 2019.

OFFICE OF FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING

The Office of Finance and Accounting oversees all financial activities of the Agency under the direction of the Chief Financial Officer. Divisions within the office include grants accounting, grants programmatic non-disaster, purchasing, accounts payable, budget, special projects, and contracts. Finance staff support other offices with financial matters, including, procurement card purchases, questions related to vendors and processing grant payments to subrecipients.

Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)

The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency was awarded \$4,061,265 through the EMPG Grant for FY 2024. The objective of the EMPG FY2024 funding is to assist state, local, tribal, and territorial emergency management agencies in implementing the National Preparedness System (NPS) and to support the National Preparedness Goal (NPG) of a secure and resilient nation. In support of local preparedness initiatives, MEMA sub-awarded \$2,565,509.56 in EMPG funds to local emergency management agencies. Programs receiving EMPG funding are required to invest funding in (1) Closing capability gaps identified in the state's most recent Stakeholder Preparedness Review (SPR); and (2) building or sustaining those capabilities that are identified as high priority through the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA)/ SPR process. In accordance with federal grant requirements, including Executive Order (EO) 13985 on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility, FY2024 EMPG funds will address Equity, Readiness, and Climate Resilience activities while building and sustaining plans, personnel, equipment, commodities/supplies, contractual and Management and Administrative costs necessary to sustain capabilities across the state in support of all five mission areas identified in the NPG.

LEPC Coordinator

In accordance with U.S. Code Title 42 Chapter 116- Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know, the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is designated as the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) for providing policy and program direction to Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) responsible for carrying out planning activities under Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA Title III) of 1986 known as the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act of 1986 (EPCRA). The EPCRA is intended to encourage and support chemical emergency planning efforts at the state and local levels and to provide state and local governments and the general public with information about potential chemical hazards present in their communities. With over 2500 reporting facilities in the state, MEMA, and the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) coordinate and share certain aspects of EPCRA reporting compliance and response activities.

Active LEPCs are eligible to apply for and receive funding through the Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Grant Program designed to increase state, territorial, tribal, and local effectiveness in safely and efficiently handling hazardous materials incidents. The Mississippi State Fire Academy (MSFA) is sub awarded a portion of the HMEP Grant for conducting Hazardous Materials training in accordance with NFPA 472 standards and OSHA 29 CFR standards. To ensure training is delivered in an equitable manner through the HMEP subaward, the MSFA is required to deliver Hazardous Materials training to volunteer firefighters across all jurisdictions using the HMEP funding. The MEMA LEPC coordinator is responsible for assisting LEPCs with gathering data under the EPCRA, monitoring LEPC planning and exercise activity, assisting with requests for training, and reviewing LEPC plans.

For Fiscal Year 24:

- In accordance with 49CFR §171.8, Railroads reported a total of 15 High Hazard Flammable Trains (HH-FT's) to the SERC.
- In accordance with the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-know Act of 1986 (EPCRA), a total of 2,584 regulated facilities submitted annual Tier II inventory forms to the SERC and LEPCs through the electronic inventory reporting system E-Plan
- Over 350 local responders received training in Hazmat Tech, Hazmat Awareness and Operations, Hazmat Incident Command and Chemistry of Hazardous Materials through the HMEP Grant.
- 7 LEPCs and the Mississippi State Fire Academy (MSFA) secured leading edge equipment for response training and exercise activities through the HMEP Grant.

Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) and Stakeholder Preparedness Review (SPR)

In accordance with Presidential Policy Directive-8 (PPD-8) on National Preparedness, the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) employs a full-time program manager to assist the Mississippi Office of Homeland Security (MOHS) with completing an annual capabilities assessment designed to measure state and local emergency management capabilities as outlined in the National Preparedness Goal (NPG). The Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) and the Stakeholder Preparedness Review (SPR) quantitatively measures local and state capabilities across 32 core capabilities identified in the National Preparedness Goal and informs the investment justification for all EMPG funding. The 2023 THIRA was submitted to FEMA on December 30, 2023.

- For FY 24, over 25 Emergency Coordinating Officers, Emergency Management personnel and non-government personnel contributed information for completing the annual assessments.
- Over 1,072 hours were dedicated to completing this annual assessment.

MEMA'S EXPENSES FISCAL YEAR 2024

Salary	\$11,377,081.00
Travel	\$277,451.00
Services	\$16,034,970.00
Commodities	\$725,202.00
Equipment	\$325,129.00
Vehicles	\$203,042.00
Grant Payments	\$135,330,752.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$164,273,627.00



(Entrance to MEMA Office of Finance and Accounting)

**FY 2024 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE GRANT
STATE OF MISSISSIPPI COUNTY FUNDING**

COUNTY	BASE ALLOCATION	POPULATION	POPULATION ALLOCATION	TOTAL 2024 ALLOCATION
Adams	\$10,000.00	29,538	\$18,313.56	\$28,313.56
Alcorn	\$10,000.00	34,740	\$21,538.80	\$31,538.80
Amite	\$10,000.00	12,720	\$7,886.40	\$17,886.40
Attala	\$10,000.00	17,889	\$11,091.18	\$21,091.18
Benton	\$10,000.00	7,646	\$4,740.52	\$14,740.52
Bolivar	\$10,000.00	30,985	\$19,210.70	\$29,210.70
Calhoun	\$10,000.00	13,266	\$8,224.92	\$18,224.92
Carroll	\$10,000.00	9,998	\$6,198.76	\$16,198.76
Chickasaw	\$10,000.00	17,106	\$10,605.72	\$20,605.72
Choctaw	\$10,000.00	8,246	\$5,112.52	\$15,112.52
Claiborne	\$10,000.00	9,135	\$5,663.70	\$15,663.70
Clarke	\$10,000.00	15,615	\$9,681.30	\$19,681.30
Clay	\$10,000.00	18,636	\$11,554.32	\$21,554.32
Coahoma	\$10,000.00	21,390	\$13,261.80	\$23,261.80
Copiah	\$10,000.00	28,368	\$17,588.16	\$27,588.16
Covington	\$10,000.00	18,340	\$11,370.80	\$21,370.80
Desoto	\$10,000.00	185,314	\$114,894.68	\$124,894.68
Forrest	\$10,000.00	78,158	\$48,457.96	\$58,457.96
Franklin	\$10,000.00	7,675	\$4,758.50	\$14,758.50
George	\$10,000.00	24,350	\$15,097.00	\$25,097.00
Greene	\$10,000.00	13,530	\$8,388.60	\$18,388.60
Grenada	\$10,000.00	21,629	\$13,409.98	\$23,409.98
Hancock	\$10,000.00	46,053	\$28,552.86	\$38,552.86
Harrison	\$10,000.00	208,621	\$129,345.02	\$139,345.02
Hinds	\$10,000.00	227,742	\$141,200.04	\$151,200.04
Holmes	\$10,000.00	17,000	\$10,540.00	\$20,540.00
Humphreys	\$10,000.00	7,785	\$4,826.70	\$14,826.70
Issaquena	\$10,000.00	1,338	\$829.56	\$10,829.56
Itawamba	\$10,000.00	23,863	\$14,795.06	\$24,795.06
Jackson	\$10,000.00	143,252	\$88,816.24	\$98,816.24
Jasper	\$10,000.00	16,367	\$10,147.54	\$20,147.54
Jefferson	\$10,000.00	7,260	\$4,501.20	\$14,501.20
Jefferson Davis	\$10,000.00	11,321	\$7,019.02	\$17,019.02
Jones	\$10,000.00	67,246	\$41,692.52	\$51,692.52
Kemper	\$10,000.00	8,988	\$5,572.56	\$15,572.56
Lafayette	\$10,000.00	55,813	\$34,604.06	\$44,604.06

**FY 2024 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE GRANT
STATE OF MISSISSIPPI COUNTY FUNDING**

COUNTY	BASE ALLOCATION	POPULATION	POPULATION ALLOCATION	TOTAL 2024 ALLOCATION
Lamar	\$10,000.00	64,222	\$39,817.64	\$49,817.64
Lauderdale	\$10,000.00	72,984	\$45,250.08	\$55,250.08
Lawrence	\$10,000.00	12,016	\$7,449.92	\$17,449.92
Leake	\$10,000.00	21,275	\$13,190.50	\$23,190.50
Lee	\$10,000.00	83,343	\$51,672.66	\$61,672.66
Leflore	\$10,000.00	28,339	\$17,570.18	\$27,570.18
Lincoln	\$10,000.00	34,907	\$21,642.34	\$31,642.34
Lowndes	\$10,000.00	58,879	\$36,504.98	\$46,504.98
Madison	\$10,000.00	109,145	\$67,669.90	\$77,669.90
Marion	\$10,000.00	24,441	\$15,153.42	\$25,153.42
Marshall	\$10,000.00	33,752	\$20,926.24	\$30,926.24
MBCI	\$10,000.00	11,090	\$6,875.80	\$16,875.80
Monroe	\$10,000.00	34,180	\$21,191.60	\$31,191.60
Montgomery	\$10,000.00	9,822	\$6,089.64	\$16,089.64
Neshoba	\$10,000.00	29,087	\$18,033.94	\$28,033.94
Newton	\$10,000.00	21,291	\$13,200.42	\$23,200.42
Noxubee	\$10,000.00	10,285	\$6,376.70	\$16,376.70
Oktibbeha	\$10,000.00	51,788	\$32,108.56	\$42,108.56
Panola	\$10,000.00	33,208	\$20,588.96	\$30,588.96
Pearl River	\$10,000.00	56,145	\$34,809.90	\$44,809.90
Perry	\$10,000.00	11,511	\$7,136.82	\$17,136.82
Pike	\$10,000.00	40,324	\$25,000.88	\$35,000.88
Pontotoc	\$10,000.00	31,184	\$19,334.08	\$29,334.08
Prentiss	\$10,000.00	25,008	\$15,504.96	\$25,504.96
Quitman	\$10,000.00	6,176	\$3,829.12	\$13,829.12
Scott	\$10,000.00	27,990	\$17,353.80	\$27,353.80
Sharkey	\$10,000.00	3,800	\$2,356.00	\$12,356.00
Simpson	\$10,000.00	25,949	\$16,088.38	\$26,088.38
Smith	\$10,000.00	14,209	\$8,809.58	\$18,809.58
Stone	\$10,000.00	18,333	\$11,366.46	\$21,366.46
Sunflower	\$10,000.00	25,971	\$16,102.02	\$26,102.02
Tallahatchie	\$10,000.00	12,715	\$7,883.30	\$17,883.30
Tate	\$10,000.00	28,064	\$17,399.68	\$27,399.68
Tippah	\$10,000.00	21,815	\$13,525.30	\$23,525.30
Tishomingo	\$10,000.00	18,850	\$11,687.00	\$21,687.00
Tunica	\$10,000.00	9,782	\$6,064.84	\$16,064.84

**FY 2024 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE GRANT
STATE OF MISSISSIPPI COUNTY FUNDING**

COUNTY	BASE ALLOCATION	POPULATION	POPULATION ALLOCATION	TOTAL 2024 ALLOCATION
Union	\$10,000.00	27,777	\$17,221.74	\$27,221.74
Walthall	\$10,000.00	13,884	\$8,608.08	\$18,608.08
Warren	\$10,000.00	44,722	\$27,727.64	\$37,727.64
Washington	\$10,000.00	44,922	\$27,851.64	\$37,851.64
Wayne	\$10,000.00	19,779	\$12,262.98	\$22,262.98
Webster	\$10,000.00	9,926	\$6,154.12	\$16,154.12
Wilkinson	\$10,000.00	8,587	\$5,323.94	\$15,323.94
Winston	\$10,000.00	17,714	\$10,982.68	\$20,982.68
Yalobusha	\$10,000.00	12,481	\$7,738.22	\$17,738.22
Yazoo	\$10,000.00	26,743	\$16,580.66	\$26,580.66
County Total Without Match				\$2,565,509.56
County Total Plus Match				\$5,131,019.12
MEMA Total Plus Match				\$2,733,956.88
M&A Plus Match				\$257,554.00
Grand Total				\$8,122,530.00



(Grants Accounting Manager Jessica Shaw hard at work)

MEMA INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

MEMA's Office of Information Technology (MITS) had an incredibly productive year, supporting the agency's diverse missions both inside and outside the walls of our organization. MITS is responsible for a wide range of functions, from Help Desk support to network operations, and each member of our team wears multiple hats to ensure the agency runs smoothly. Within MITS, our teams cover Geospatial Information Systems (GIS), Management Information Systems (MIS), web development, communications, and cybersecurity.

Agency-Wide IT Support and Ticket Management

As the agency's IT hub, MITS supports every department through the agency ticketing system to manage requests efficiently. This year, 1,270 support tickets were processed through Xcitium alone. Including phone calls, CIVIX tickets, and email requests, approximately 1,700 tickets were handled while maintaining a high service level.

Developing Real-Time, Data-Driven Dashboards

One of the most impactful projects this year was the development of a few data dashboards to provide near real-time information, benefiting the agency and the State. These projects required collaboration across all MITS teams—GIS, Systems, Networking, Communications, and Help Desk. Noteworthy products include:

- An Active Hurricane Dashboard
- The Mississippi Hazard Dashboard
- Storm Surge Risk Map
- Hurricane Evacuation Routes
- Mississippi Dams Tool
- Historical Severe Weather and Hurricane Tools

These dashboards are designed to deliver clear, actionable insights to enhance the agency's readiness and response capabilities.

Introducing Just-In-Time Training for Crisis Track Damage Assessments

To equip municipal-level personnel with no prior experience in conducting damage assessments, a just-in-time training module was launched through the new MEMA Web Training Portal, tailored specifically for IT-related topics. This provides accessible training for using the Crisis Track Mobile application, supporting timely and accurate disaster response. The course is designed to prepare, in a short time, those tasked to conduct assessments post-disaster. It covers step-by-step action items that take someone from no knowledge to collecting data in as short as 15 minutes.

Strengthening System Integrations and Cybersecurity

MITS continues to support system integration, archiving, survey tools, and software implementations, all while prioritizing cybersecurity. Together with Network Operations, MIS has been vigilant in protecting the Agency against cyber threats by monitoring systems, maintaining network integrity, and implementing cybersecurity measures across multiple sites. The agency main website, msema.org, alone receives over 135,000 unique visitors annually, and with an upcoming website revamp, security will remain a top priority alongside performance.

Enhancing Cellular Connectivity and Supporting SEOC Renovation

The Communications Department upgraded all non-5G devices to enhance cellular connectivity, improving service reliability and performance across the Agency. The department also played a vital role in the SEOC floor renovation, managing the dismantling and reinstallation of all Emergency Support Function (ESF) stations, tower computers, desk phones, and other equipment. This project was instrumental in providing a refreshed, functional workspace for the SEOC team, achieved through collaboration with other departments to bring it to completion. Additional IT and facility upgrades were implemented at the SELOC, including the addition of the new PA system.



(MEMA employees on the SEOC floor during a training)

MISSISSIPPI BUSINESS EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

The Mississippi Business Emergency Operations Center's (MSBEOC) mission is to coordinate the activities and resources among private-sector businesses and volunteer organizations, both within the state and across the nation. The MSBEOC is committed to improving response efforts, maintaining and restoring self-sufficiency, and reducing reliance on federal assistance to maximize business, industry, and economic stabilization. Our goal is to expedite the return of the business environment to normal operations as swiftly as possible.

2024 Southeast Private Sector Summit

The Mississippi Business Emergency Operations Center (MSBEOC) proudly served as the host state for the 2024 Southeast Private Sector Summit, held in Pearl, Mississippi on January 31 – February 1, 2024. This summit was a pivotal event, gathering public and private sector partners from across the region to engage in meaningful discussions about emergency management and the effective coordination of partnerships during disaster situations. As the host, MSBEOC facilitated critical conversations to strengthen the collaboration between businesses and government agencies to enhance disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.

One of the summit's key features was a simulated exercise focused on activating a State Business Emergency Operations Center. This provided participants with hands-on experience in managing disaster response efforts and underscored the vital role businesses play in supporting emergency operations at the state level. Attendees also received a briefing from Mississippi's cybersecurity advisor, highlighting emerging threats to private and public entities and offering strategies to protect essential infrastructure.

The summit further addressed the complexities of supply chain disruptions, focusing on how such disruptions impact businesses and communities. Discussions on business continuity and resilience strategies encouraged participants to explore proactive measures for sustaining operations during crises. Coordination success stories illustrated the effectiveness of strong public-private partnerships, while post-disaster economic recovery discussions emphasized the importance of swift and strategic recovery efforts. The summit also offered a platform for businesses to share preparedness strategies, ensuring that organizations are better equipped to weather future disasters.



(State Coordinating Officer / BEOC Director Todd DeMuth speaking during the Private Public Partners Summit)

Coordination of Welcome Kits for March 2023 Tornado Survivors

Following the devastating March 2023 tornadoes, the MSBEOC continued to play a crucial role in coordinating the distribution of “Welcome Kits” to survivors transitioning into temporary housing during Fiscal Year 2024. This initiative, in collaboration with Pinelake Church, provided essential items to individuals and families who had lost their homes, helping to ease the burden of moving into new living spaces. The “Welcome Kits” contained necessary household items such as laundry detergent, dishes, towels, soap, and personal care products, offering a sense of normalcy and comfort to those affected.

Pinelake Church generously donated the Welcome Kits, and the distribution was facilitated by MEMA and FEMA, ensuring that the kits reached survivors as they settled into temporary housing units. This effort was an important part of the recovery process, helping tornado survivors meet their immediate needs during the transition to a new home. The seamless coordination between local organizations and government agencies demonstrated the strength of community-based partnerships in disaster recovery.

This initiative reflects the MSBEOC’s ongoing commitment to providing tangible support to disaster survivors through effective collaboration and resource mobilization. By coordinating with organizations like Pinelake Church, the MSBEOC ensured that critical supplies were delivered in a timely and efficient manner, further supporting the recovery process for affected individuals.



(Pinelake Welcome Kits for March 2023 Tornado survivors)

(MSBEOC Private Sector Liaison Heather Freeman speaking at the Private Public Partners Summit)

Expanded Outreach to Trade Associations and Chamber of Commerce

In the past year, the MSBEOC expanded its outreach efforts to engage with trade associations and chambers of commerce across Mississippi expanding to 138 partners. This initiative aimed to better understand the specific needs of the state’s business community regarding disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. By establishing open lines of communication with these organizations, the MSBEOC sought to foster stronger relationships and provide businesses with the tools and information necessary to enhance their resilience in the face of disasters.

Through a series of meetings and discussions, MSBEOC explored the challenges faced by businesses during emergencies and identified areas where additional support could be provided. These conversations have proven invaluable in shaping future preparedness and response initiatives, ensuring businesses have the resources to recover quickly and effectively from disaster events. Moreover, this outreach has enabled businesses to play a more active role in supporting community recovery efforts, further strengthening the state’s overall disaster resilience.

The ongoing engagement with trade associations and chambers of commerce reflects MSBEOC’s dedication to creating a more resilient business environment. By maintaining close collaboration with key industry representatives, the MSBEOC has positioned itself as a vital conduit between the private sector and emergency management agencies, enabling more coordinated and effective disaster response and recovery efforts.

OFFICE OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

MEMA’s External Affairs Office has a mission of getting the right information to the right people at the right time to make the right decisions during an emergency or disaster. This office ensures the public is given access to life-saving information. That information can come from multiple mediums before, during, and after a disaster. One medium this office uses is video production. EA produced 30 videos in the last fiscal year to effectively communicate to the public current threats and what they should be doing to protect themselves during those hazards. These videos have proven an effective communication line with over 19,000 views within the fiscal year.

Communication during an incident is vital and can look different whether it’s coordinating with other state agencies or reviewing a plan of action for internal stakeholders. In order to effectively lead the agency’s communication efforts, all members of the External Affairs Office have a working knowledge of current affairs and all agency programs and functions.



(Allie Jasper speaking to AccuWeather September 2024)

This fiscal year, the MEMA External Affairs staff launched the new “Preparedness Guide for Older Adults” to assist the aging population with special needs in preparing for a disaster. The MEMA External Affairs team and the Deputy Director authored and published a new MEMA Guidebook: The Fundamentals of a Disaster, to explain the disaster assistance process for citizens and local governments.

The External Affairs team uses multiple tools, such as social media, the agency’s website, and streaming platforms to convey the state’s response to survivors, the media, and stakeholders. The Office of External Affairs is also responsible for further educating the public on specific safety measures to take before, during, and after a disaster. The team conducts tours to educate the public and encourages action when it comes to preparedness. The goal of EA is to make sure every Mississippian has access to information. A total of 11 tours of the State Emergency Operations were conducted, and MEMA visited 13 on-site locations for presentations. These tours and presentations are given to a range of ages from pre-k to senior citizens, furthering the mission of educating all Mississippians.

As communicators, it’s important to share knowledge and lessons learned with other public information officers on the state and county level. EA led a PIO Summit at the SEOC where PIO’s across the state learned more about how MEMA coordinates with their specific Emergency Support Function during disasters. The Chief Communications Officer also taught a basic PIO class in February and March and an overview PIO class at the Partners in Preparedness Summit in May of 2024.



(Videographer Eric Bullard giving a presentation)

MEMA's External Affairs team has built an excellent professional working relationship with members of the media to ensure vital information is given to the public. The team also researches communication gaps and works to fill them so no one is left out during a disaster.

MEMA's External Affairs and Information Technology teams are working to launch a new MEMA website in calendar year 2025.

Website Analytics

Page Views	245,781
Visitors	129,364
Posts	71

Social Media Analytics

New Followers	17,039
Impressions	1,202,236
Reach	1,705,436



(Director McCraney speaking to State Public Information Officers)



(Chief Communications Officer Malary White on WLBT)



(Public Information Officer Amanda Guizerix speaking to a group of students)

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MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY



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