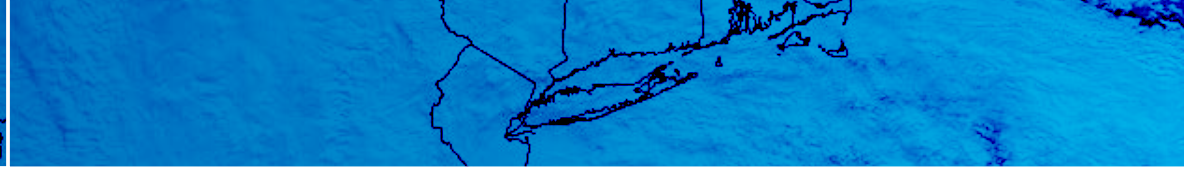


HURRICANE SANDY REBUILDING STRATEGY

Progress Update — Data



Spring 2014



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BACKGROUND

On August 19, 2013, the Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force released its [Rebuilding Strategy](#) for the Sandy impacted region. The Rebuilding Strategy included a long-term plan for rebuilding that guides Sandy Supplemental spending to drive regional coordination and make communities more resilient to future disasters. The Rebuilding Strategy also aligns federal, state and local policies to achieve seven goals that are important to the long-term rebuilding of the region in the most economically efficient, ecologically robust and innovative ways possible. These goals are:

- Promoting Resilient Rebuilding through Innovative Ideas and a Thorough Understanding of Current and Future Risk
- Ensuring a Regionally Coordinated, Resilient Approach to Infrastructure Investment
- Restoring and Strengthening Homes and Providing Families with Safe, Affordable Housing Options
- Supporting Small Businesses and Revitalizing Local Economies
- Addressing Insurance Challenges, Understanding, and Affordability
- Building State and Local Capacity to Plan for and Implement Long-Term Recovery and Rebuilding
- Improving Data Sharing Between Federal, State, and Local Officials

The Rebuilding Strategy identified 69 specific recommendations across these broad goals as well as specific member agencies¹ to lead the implementation of each of them. Since the publication of the Rebuilding Strategy, these agencies have continued to work closely together to move the recommendations forward and deliver on their commitments to the region and the President.

This report includes an update on the implementation of one of the Rebuilding Strategy goals. This report is one section of a larger report that includes each of the seven Rebuilding Strategy goals and the internal efforts to improve data sharing and accountability through the Sandy Program Management Office (PMO); recommendations are grouped according to these goals. This shorter report includes background information from the original Rebuilding Strategy, identifies the relevant leading agencies¹, and includes brief updates on highlighted areas of progress made since the publication of the Rebuilding Strategy through the spring of 2014. Additional Rebuilding Strategy goal reports and a report on the PMO can be downloaded individually or can all be downloaded in the full report. A full list of the Rebuilding Strategy recommendations is included in the full report as an appendix to the report. To learn more about the Task Force or the Sandy Supplemental, to read the original Rebuilding Strategy, or to see the status of the Sandy Supplemental funding, please visit the following websites:

- Executive Order 13632, establishing the Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/DCPD-201200936/pdf/DCPD-201200936.pdf>

¹ While the Rebuilding Strategy identified specific agencies (such as the Department of Housing and Urban Development) to lead implementation, in some cases these leads have changed, or more specific subcomponents of or offices within an agency (such as the Office of Community Planning and Development) have been identified. Further, for some recommendations, the Rebuilding Strategy also identified contributing or supporting agencies. This progress report reflects the latest lead agencies only, and does not include contributing agencies, which in some cases have played a significant role to support implementation.

- Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, 2013, or “Sandy Supplemental,” which provided \$50 billion in disaster relief funding to Federal agencies: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-113publ2/pdf/PLAW-113publ2.pdf>
- The Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Strategy, published by the Task Force on August 19, 2013: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=HSRebuildingStrategy.pdf>
- Recovery.gov Hurricane Sandy maps, for the latest status of Sandy Supplemental funds by state: <http://www.recovery.gov/Sandy/whereisthemoneygoing/maps/Pages/HudPmo.aspx>

REBUILDING STRATEGY GOAL: IMPROVING DATA SHARING BETWEEN FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL OFFICIALS

The use of data facilitates decision-making that is well-informed and leads to goals that are both clearly defined and realistically achievable. In post-disaster situations, data collection and application are especially important for on-the-ground recovery efforts, as well as for long-term policy formulation and program management. Data and information are extremely valuable to Federal, Tribal, State, and local governments, as well as to private citizens, businesses, non-profits, and other community groups.

Lead Agencies

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Small Business Administration (SBA)

Progress Update

The Task Force report recommends improving data sharing between and among federal agencies and between and among federal, state, and local agencies. The agencies leading these efforts have made progress on many of these recommendations, and are working closely to implement longer-term goals.

Key accomplishments to date include increased flexibility for FEMA to share valuable recovery data with other federal agencies by renewing its Disaster Recovery Assistance Files System of Records Notice (SORN) and by publishing its [Hazard Mitigation, Disaster Public Assistance \(PA\), and Disaster Loan Programs SORN](#). FEMA also issued a Policy for its Recovery data aimed at sharing data expediently and securely. FEMA launched a website explaining its information sharing processes and instructions to its key stakeholders (federal, state, local, tribal and certain established voluntary organizations). FEMA will soon place a data element glossary and sample report on the site. FEMA plans to create a similar, public-facing website.

Further, HUD, SBA, and FEMA are working together to define disaster relevant data sets that will be published to the Administration's data.gov website.

Finally, FEMA and HUD are establishing an interagency data exchange that would allow both agencies to share and access critical information in real (or expedient) time, improving operations and program delivery at both agencies. The Disaster Assistance Improvement Program has finalized system requirements and design for an automated data exchange between FEMA and HUD that will allow the agencies to share relevant disaster data necessary to make eligibility determinations and reduce duplicative payments for housing assistance following a disaster. Though the initial focus is on HUD and FEMA, once built, this system could in the future be expanded to include data from other agencies as well.

What this means for communities

State and local partners will be able to **access and understand valuable federal agency disaster data**. Federal agencies will be able to expediently and securely **share information** among one another and other stakeholders, thus accelerating **disaster relief efforts and assistance**.

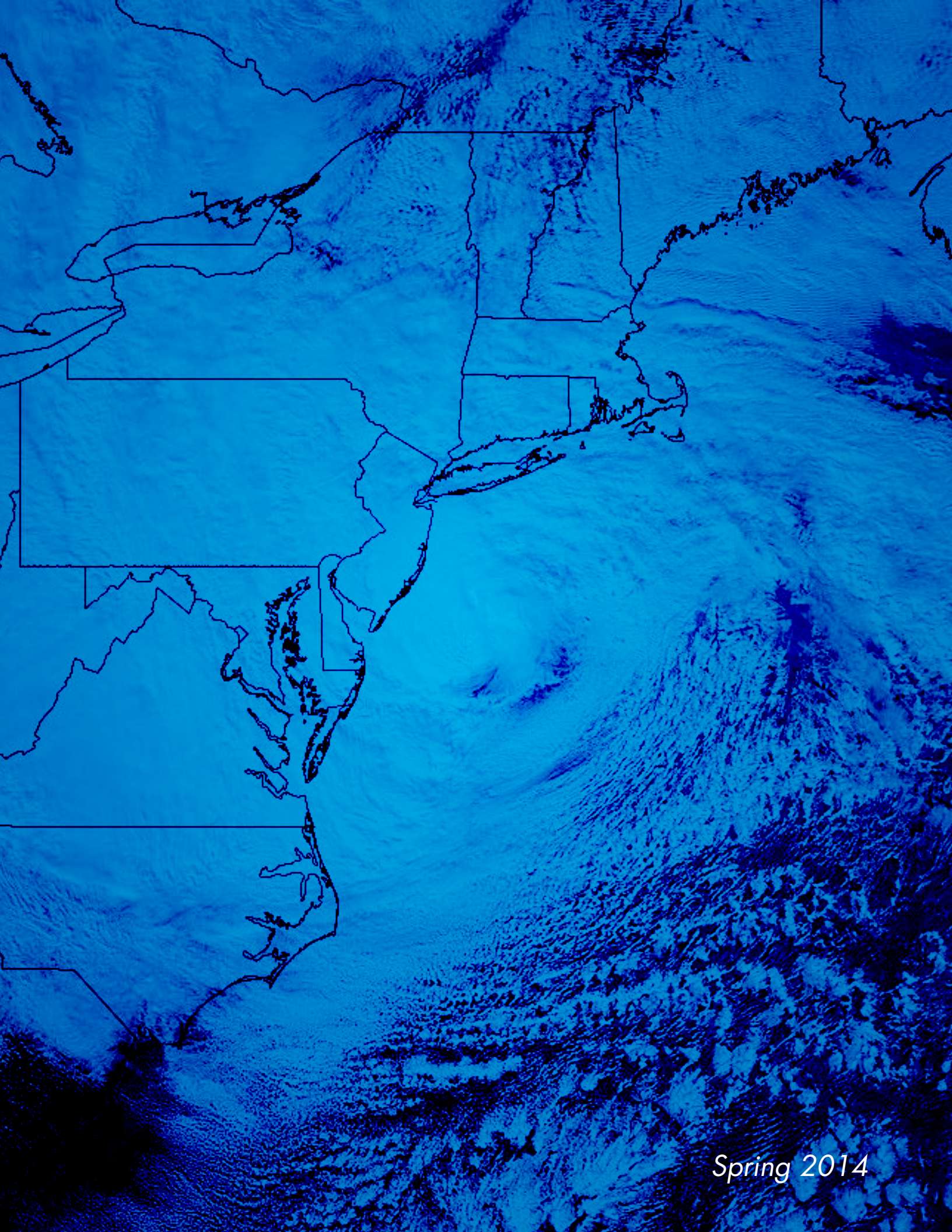
For More Information

- FEMA's Hazard Mitigation, Disaster Public Assistance (PA), and Disaster Loan Programs SORN: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-03-24/pdf/2014-06361.pdf>

DATA RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE HURRICANE SANDY REBUILDING STRATEGY

Data: Improving Data Sharing Between Federal, State and Local Officials

1. Agencies should make aggregated, PII-scrubbed data about disaster-affected populations available to the public using a central website similar to <http://www.data.gov>. Specifically, FEMA, HUD, and SBA should coordinate to create a new website or adapt an existing one (such as FEMA's openFEMA site) for data posting during disasters. In addition, FEMA, HUD, and SBA should create a process for digesting raw data into an aggregated form that the public can view.
2. Each agency and each State should identify a "data steward" who serves as a point of contact for data requests. This contact should not only be available after disasters, but also serve as an informational resource in advance of disasters. FEMA, HUD, and SBA should each designate an individual within their agencies that is permanently available to receive data sharing requests and related questions from States, local governments, and non-governmental entities. Each agency should then distribute the name and contact information of that individual to all 50 States. In the event of a disaster, agencies should send affected States a reminder that the data steward is available to assist them and that each State is responsible for identifying a central point of contact within the governor's office or within the primary disaster response agency to coordinate requests with Federal agencies.
3. Each agency should catalogue its disaster data in a "menu" that describes the data that it may share with States and local governments. Specifically, each agency's data steward (see recommendation 63) should create a document containing a list of all data sets that are typically requested during a disaster. Each data item description should include the fields in the data set and the units of measurement, as well as a brief description of how the data can be used by States responding to a disaster and describe the limitations of the data (privacy requirements, aggregation, data latency, etc.). This document should be distributed to disaster agencies in each State.
4. FEMA, HUD, and SBA should adopt a common data sharing agreement template so that data requestors do not have to familiarize themselves with three separate forms. Attorneys and privacy officials from these agencies should meet to compare their current data sharing agreement formats and identify common boilerplate language that can serve as the basis for an interagency template. Once drafted, this template should then be distributed by each agency's data sharing steward to the States.
5. Work towards a multi-agency integrated data repository, or "data hub," shared and operated by FEMA and HUD, that, to the extent permitted by law and Federal policy, allows those agencies to access and store one another's data and to pass these data along to States in the event of a Federally declared disaster. FEMA and HUD should provide technical support and personnel resources to further this tool's development in preparation for the next disaster. In addition, agency attorneys and privacy officials should discuss what steps will be necessary to begin preparing the legal framework for a multi-agency data portal.
6. To help make Federal data available to States, agencies should review "routine use" language in relevant SORNs to determine whether any changes are warranted that could provide greater flexibility to share information for planning purposes, to share information across State agencies and with local governments and to broaden categories of records to cover data from other sources. Attorneys in FEMA's Office of Chief Counsel who have considered this issue have offered to make themselves available to provide guidance.



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