

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND  
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

HURRICANE IDA PREPARATION AND RESPONSE



PERFORMANCE AUDIT SERVICES  
ISSUED MARCH 24, 2022

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LOUISIANA LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR  
MICHAEL J. "MIKE" WAGUESPACK, CPA

March 24, 2022

The Honorable Patrick Page Cortez,  
President of the Senate  
The Honorable Clay Schexnayder,  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Dear Senator Cortez and Representative Schexnayder:

This report provides the results of our evaluation of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness's (GOHSEP) preparation for and response to Hurricane Ida, which made landfall August 29, 2022. Twenty-five parishes affected by Ida were included in the president's federal emergency declaration.

We conducted this evaluation as a result of a legislative request.

Under the Louisiana Homeland Security and Emergency Assistance and Disaster Act, GOHSEP oversees the State Emergency Operations Plan. Each parish, in turn, has an Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (OHSEP) director who coordinates local efforts and acts as the liaison to GOHSEP. As part of its oversight, GOHSEP reviews the parishes' Emergency Operation Plans (EOPs).

We found GOHSEP reviewed most parish EOPs in a timely manner, but the agency does not have the authority to require that parishes include important components in their plans. For example, in its most recent reviews, GOHSEP found 17 of the 25 (68%) parishes in the Ida emergency declaration did not identify fuel requirements for first responders, and 13 (52%) did not identify who was responsible for staffing and managing Points of Distribution.

In addition, we found that pre-awarded emergency contracts were not always sufficient to meet the demand for resources after Ida. In many cases, the state had to find additional contractors after the storm and pay more money for their services. For example, GOHSEP paid \$1.6 million for generators from pre-awarded emergency contract vendors, but paid additional vendors approximately \$9.7 million for generators because of insufficient supply.

We also found that, between August 26 and December 9, 2021, GOHSEP received approximately 3,200 requests for assistance from the affected parishes through its web-based Emergency Operations Center (WebEOC), with generators and fuel the most common items

The Honorable Patrick Page Cortez,  
President of the Senate  
The Honorable Clay Schexnayder,  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
March 24, 2022  
Page 2

requested. However, it was difficult to determine whether the parish requests were answered in a timely manner because GOHSEP and other state Emergency Support Function agencies do not fully use the online form's status and date fields to document their progress in fulfilling requests.

Louisiana also suffered extensive power, internet, and cellular outages that made it difficult for local officials to communicate their requests to GOHSEP. GOHSEP's backup system failed as well, which further affected parishes' abilities to respond to emergencies and request resources. Following Hurricane Katrina, GOHSEP established the Louisiana Wireless Information Network (LWIN) as a backup system to allow seamless communication among all responders and improve information sharing and systems. However, only 11 of the 30 (36.7%) local officials who responded to a survey we conducted said LWIN worked effectively during Ida.

We found, too, that the state's Hurricane Ida Sheltering Program is moving more quickly than FEMA's housing program. As of February 15, 2022, 11,980 residents were housed in 4,166 housing units provided through the state's program. In comparison, only 1,107 housing units had been provided through FEMA's program as of February 2022. Because the state's program was implemented so quickly, GOHSEP did not establish a process to ensure the most affected residents were given priority, and it did not sufficiently communicate how the program would work so it could manage expectations about the time needed to set up the housing units.

The report contains our findings, conclusions, and recommendations. I hope this report will benefit you in your legislative decision-making process.

We would like to express our appreciation to GOHSEP, parish OHSEP directors, first responders, and local elected officials for their assistance during this audit.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Waguespack", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael J. "Mike" Waguespack, CPA  
Legislative Auditor

MJW/aa

# Louisiana Legislative Auditor

Michael J. “Mike” Waguespack, CPA



## Louisiana Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness Hurricane Ida Response

March 2022

Audit Control # 40210023

### Introduction

Pursuant to a legislative request, we evaluated the Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness’ (GOHSEP) preparation for and response to Hurricane Ida. Due to the extraordinary threat posed by Hurricane Ida, which made landfall on Sunday, August 29, 2021, the President of the United States designated 25 parishes (*see text box at right*) in his emergency declaration. Exhibit 1 shows the track and wind speed of Hurricane Ida. This audit focused on parish emergency operations plans (EOPs), pre-awarded emergency contracts, resource requests through GOHSEP’s web-based Emergency Operations Center (WebEOC) system, communication issues, and the state’s program for providing temporary housing for dislocated residents.

The 25 parishes in the emergency declaration were: Ascension, Assumption, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberia, Iberville, Jefferson, Lafourche, Livingston, Orleans, Plaquemines, Pointe Coupee, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. Helena, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Martin, St. Mary, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Terrebonne, Washington, West Baton Rouge, and West Feliciana.

**Exhibit 1  
Hurricane Ida Track and Wind Speed**



Source: Obtained from [www.theadvocate.com](http://www.theadvocate.com)

**State Responsibilities.** The Louisiana Homeland Security and Emergency Assistance and Disaster Act<sup>1</sup> (Disaster Act) created GOHSEP to prepare for, prevent where possible, respond to, recover from, and mitigate to lessen the effects of man-made or natural disasters that threaten our state. The Director of GOHSEP is appointed by the Governor and acts on his behalf in the event of an emergency or disaster. Louisiana’s Emergency Operations Center is operated within GOHSEP and serves as the central operations center for emergency response when activated. GOHSEP administers the State Emergency Operations Plan that establishes the policies and structure for how the state manages emergencies and disasters. The State’s response is organized and coordinated under Emergency

Support Functions (ESFs) that are categorized by the type of support or resource provided or

<sup>1</sup> Louisiana Revised Statutes (LRS) 29:721 – 739

After each hurricane, GOHSEP conducts **After Action Reviews (AARs)** in conjunction with ESFs and affected parishes to review what worked well, identify lessons learned, and make recommendations for improvement. For example, Hurricane Ida's AAR included recommendations related to GOHSEP's WebEOC system, infrastructure and logistical concerns, mass care sheltering issues, and communications.

managed and include transportation; communications; firefighting; emergency management; and mass care, housing, and human services. Appendix C summarizes all ESFs and the different agencies under each area.

**Parish Responsibilities.** Each parish has a dedicated Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (OHSEP) director who is in charge of coordinating local efforts and acts as the liaison to GOHSEP for disaster assistance. Although the roles and responsibilities are similar for parish governments and GOHSEP when preparing for and responding to a disaster, parish government authority is limited to the parish jurisdiction and is primarily responsible for the

immediate response in the area. Parish OHSEP directors' responsibilities include directing the response of all local parish agencies and resources during a disaster, ensuring that parish assets are used before requesting state assistance, and making resource requests to GOHSEP when parish capabilities are overwhelmed. They also prepare and submit parish EOPs to GOHSEP and apply for and administer state and federal grant funding for their area.

**Emergency Management Cycle.** According to GOHSEP, the emergency management cycle consists of four components, including mitigation, preparation, response and recovery (*see illustration at right*). This report focuses on the preparation and response phases. To conduct this audit, we conducted multiple site visits to local OHSEP offices and observed damage; conducted interviews and surveyed OHSEP directors, first responders, and elected parish officials; used WebEOC data to analyze resource requests; and evaluated the state's Hurricane Ida Sheltering Program.

## Emergency Management Cycle

### Mitigate

Mitigation efforts are attempts to prevent hazards from developing into disasters or to reduce the effects of disasters.

### Prepare/Prevent

Emergency managers develop plans of action to manage and counter their risks and take action to build the necessary capabilities needed to implement such plans.

### Respond

Response includes the mobilization of necessary emergency services and first responders in the disaster area.

### Recover

Recovery efforts are primarily concerned with actions that involve rebuilding destroyed property, re-employment and the repair of other essential infrastructure.



**Source:** Louisiana Elected Officials Emergency Management Manual.

The objective of this audit was:

**To evaluate GOHSEP's preparation for and response to Hurricane Ida.**

Our results are summarized on the next page and discussed in detail throughout the remainder of the report. Appendix A summarizes GOHSEP's management response, Appendix B outlines our scope and methodology, Appendix C summarizes ESFs and the corresponding state agencies and functions, Appendix D summarizes emergency contracts by category, Appendix E shows the number of cellular outages by parish as of August 30, 2021, and Appendix F outlines the total value of purchase orders for the state's Hurricane Ida Sheltering Program as of March 3, 2022.

## Objective: To evaluate GOHSEP's preparation for and response to Hurricane Ida

We found the following regarding the state's preparation for and response to Hurricane Ida:

- **While GOHSEP reviewed most parish Emergency Operation Plans (EOPs) timely, parishes did not always include important components in these plans. For example, in the most recent reviews of EOPs, GOHSEP found that 17 of the 25 (68%) parishes in the emergency declaration did not identify fuel requirements for first responders, and 13 (52%) did not identify who was responsible for staffing and managing Points of Distribution (PODs).** However, GOHSEP does not have the authority to mandate that parishes include missing components in their EOPs. Including all components in EOPs is important because these plans help ensure appropriate systems are in place before a disaster or emergency so that needed resources (e.g., equipment, materials, supplies, and manpower) are identified and available.
- **Pre-awarded emergency contracts were not always sufficient to meet the demand for resources after Hurricane Ida. In many cases, the state had to find additional contractors after the storm, which were often costlier, in order to meet the demand.** For example, GOHSEP paid \$1.6 million for generators from pre-awarded emergency contract vendors, but paid additional vendors approximately \$9.7 million for generators because of insufficient supply. According to GOHSEP, some vendors may not submit bids for pre-awarded contracts because they know they can be paid a higher rate if they provide emergency services.
- **Between August 26, 2021, and December 9, 2021, GOHSEP received approximately 3,200 requests through WebEOC after Hurricane Ida, with the most common items requested being generators and fuel. However, because GOHSEP and other state Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) do not fully use status and date fields to document the progress of fulfilling resource requests, it is difficult to determine whether parishes received requested resources timely.** Allowing local officials (i.e., first responders, mayors, parish presidents, healthcare workers, etc.) to have "view only" access to WebEOC, and setting up automatic notifications of status changes would improve efficiency and communication with parishes.
- **Louisiana experienced extensive power, internet, and cellular outages that made it difficult for local officials to communicate requests to GOHSEP. GOHSEP's backup system also failed, which further impacted parishes' abilities to respond to emergencies and request resources.** Following Hurricane Katrina, GOHSEP established the Louisiana Wireless Information Network (LWIN) as a backup system to enable seamless communication among



all responders to improve information sharing and systems. Since 2006, GOHSEP has spent more than \$300 million in state, federal, and local funds on LWIN. However, only 11 of 30 (36.7%) local officials who responded to our survey stated that LWIN was an effective means of communications during Hurricane Ida.

- **The state's Hurricane Ida Sheltering Program is moving more quickly than FEMA's housing program. As of February 15, 2022, 11,980 residents are housed in 4,166 housing units provided through the state's program compared to FEMA's program, which has only provided 1,107 housing units as of February 2022.** Because the program was implemented quickly, GOHSEP did not establish a process to prioritize applicant registrations to ensure the most impacted residents were given priority. In addition, better communication and management of expectations may have reduced the public's frustration over the speed of the program.

Our findings and our recommendations are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

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**While GOHSEP reviewed most parish Emergency Operation Plans (EOPs) timely, parishes did not always include important components in these plans. For example, in the most recent reviews of EOPs, GOHSEP found that 17 of the 25 (68%) parishes in the emergency declaration did not identify fuel requirements for first responders, and 13 (52%) did not identify who was responsible for staffing and managing Points of Distribution (PODs). However, GOHSEP does not have the authority to mandate that parishes include missing components in their EOPs.**

The state's Disaster Act<sup>2</sup> requires each parish to develop and maintain a parish-level all-hazards EOP. A parish EOP details the overall responsibilities of parish government, as well as guidelines and organizational priorities necessary to ensure a coordinated local, state and federal response. The parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (OHSEP) is responsible for creating this plan, with input from other local officials such as the emergency management community, law enforcement, hospital and health care facilities, and public works. State law<sup>3</sup> also requires GOHSEP to periodically review these EOPs.

The purpose of the EOP is to define the process for how the parish prepares for, responds to, and recovers from disasters and emergencies.

**Source:** GOHSEP's 2015 Elected Officials' Manual.

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<sup>2</sup> LRS 29:729 B

<sup>3</sup> LRS 29:726(E)(4)

**Although GOHSEP reviewed 21 of 25 (84%) parish EOPs for those parishes in the emergency declaration according to its four-year review schedule, parishes did not always include important components in these plans.** GOHSEP requires that parishes revise and update their EOPs every two years, and GOHSEP performs a review on them every four years. GOHSEP reviews each parish's EOP using its Parish Emergency Operations Plan Review document that it created using both parish and federal planning guidance<sup>4</sup> that identifies the key functional areas necessary within EOPs. These key areas include transportation; communication; emergency management; resource support; search and rescue; and mass care, housing, and human services. During its review, GOHSEP determines whether parishes include certain components in their plan and makes recommendations for improvement. For example, in the most recent reviews of EOPs, GOHSEP found that 17 of the 25 (68%) parishes did not identify fuel requirements for first responders, and 13 (52%) did not identify who was responsible for staffing and managing Points of Distribution (PODs). Including all components is important because these plans help ensure appropriate systems are in place before a disaster or emergency so that needed resources (e.g., equipment, materials, supplies, and manpower) are identified and available.

**GOHSEP does not have the authority to mandate that parishes include missing components in their EOPs.** According to GOHSEP, it is the parish's responsibility to accept or reject the recommendations made as a result of the review. GOHSEP can only encourage parishes to update their plan to include missing components as it does not have the authority to mandate that parishes include them. Exhibit 2 shows the number and percentage of parishes in the 25 declared disaster parishes missing certain components from their most recent EOP.

<b>Exhibit 2</b>		
<b>Examples of Components Missing from Parish EOPs</b>		
<b>For the 25 Declared Disaster Parishes During Hurricane Ida</b>		
<b>Component</b>	<b>Parishes Not Including Component</b>	<b>% of Parishes Not Including Component</b>
Identify how sex offenders will be identified, transported, and sheltered.	17	68%
Identify who is responsible for managing and staffing PODs.	13	52%
Estimate the number of Tourists, Special Needs, Sex Offenders, Inmates, Parish citizens, and Parish citizens with pets who would require local transportation to evacuate.	13	52%
Describe the process used for bi-annual capability assessment of health and medical facilities.	11	44%
Identify evacuation shelters that are equipped to accept and temporarily house household pets and canine SAR teams.	11	44%
Provide details on fuel planning (contract/vendor) with the parish.	14	56%
Identify daily fuel requirements and capacity from local first responder departments.	17	68%
Indicate the number and type of correctional facilities in the Parish.	13	52%
<b>Source:</b> Prepared by legislative auditor's staff using EOP review results provided by GOHSEP.		

<sup>4</sup> *Basic Parish Planning Guidance Vol 1: EOP Development* (August 2011), and the *Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101 version 2* (November 2010)

**Recommendation 1:** GOHSEP should work with the legislature to consider giving GOHSEP the statutory authority to require parishes to revise their EOP plans to include any missing components of their plan.

**Summary of Management's Response:** GOHSEP agrees with this recommendation and stated that it will work with the legislature to review and consider updating current law to update requirements for parish Emergency Operation Plans and the GOHSEP review process. See Appendix A for GOHSEP's full response.

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**Pre-awarded emergency contracts were not always sufficient to meet the demand for resources after Hurricane Ida. In many cases, the state had to find additional contractors after the storm, which were often costlier, in order to meet the demand. For example, GOHSEP paid \$1.6 million for generators from pre-awarded emergency contract vendors, but paid additional vendors approximately \$9.7 million for generators because of insufficient supply.**

Establishing contracts before a disaster or emergency allows states to secure resources that may become limited post-disaster. After a declared emergency or disaster, state law<sup>5</sup> requires executive branch agencies to procure supplies from a pre-awarded state contract list that is managed by the Office of State Procurement (OSP). These contracts follow the state's procurement code, have set prices for different commodities, and are pre-awarded for up to three years. OSP currently has 140 pre-awarded emergency contracts<sup>6</sup> that include 57 categories of goods and services. These goods and services include fuel, generators, water, hospital supplies, etc. Appendix D summarizes the number of emergency contracts per category.

**Most emergency contracts we reviewed were with Louisiana vendors.** Of the 80 of 140 pre-awarded emergency contracts we reviewed, 42 (52.5%) of the vendors were located in Louisiana, while 23 (28.8%) were located in other southern states including Texas, Mississippi, Georgia, Virginia, Tennessee, South Carolina, and Florida.

**Source:** Analysis of OSP contracts.

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<sup>5</sup> See the Louisiana Procurement Code (LRS 39:1551 et seq).

<sup>6</sup> This was the total number of pre-awarded emergency contracts as of January 31, 2022.

**GOHSEP did not have enough resources, such as generators, available through its pre-awarded emergency contracts. As a result, it had to seek certain supplies from off-contract vendors which were often more expensive.** For example, the state only had two emergency contract vendors for generators. GOHSEP had to request generators not only from these pre-awarded emergency contractors, but also from multiple off-contract vendors, the Louisiana National Guard (LANG), and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to meet demand. In total, parishes requested at least 286 generators between August 26, 2021, and December 9, 2021, which was the highest of any request in GOHSEP’s web-based Emergency Operation Center (WebEOC) system.<sup>7</sup> GOHSEP paid \$1.6 million for generators from pre-awarded emergency contract vendors but had to contract with additional vendors after the storm for approximately \$9.7 million for generators because of insufficient supply. Exhibit 3

Exhibit 3 Top 10 Parishes with Power Outages after Hurricane Ida	
Parish	Average % of Customers Without Power*
Terrebonne	75.17%
Lafourche	75.11%
St Charles	72.51%
St John the Baptist	71.08%
St. James	63.21%
Plaquemines	58.05%
Tangipahoa	53.84%
St Helena	53.81%
Jefferson	53.24%
Orleans	44.68%

\*Calculated as the average of all reported power outages during the period of August 29, 2021 through September 30, 2021, and assuming there were no outages to report for instances where parishes did not submit an outage report.  
**Source:** Prepared by legislative auditor’s staff using data from the Public Service Commission and WebEOC.

**Another example of increased costs after a declared emergency is the delivery cost of fuel.** Regular (non-emergency) fuel deliveries include delivery and labor costs, but emergency fuel costs do not include delivery, labor, or equipment. The extra charges for emergency fuel are what makes emergency fuel more expensive. The state has one pre-awarded emergency contract for fuel but it does not have a specified rate because the cost of fuel fluctuates. During the first month after the storm, the state spent \$5.8 million for fuel and \$17.0 million for equipment, delivery, and labor, which is more than the entire fuel cost for the 2020 Hurricane Season.

**Source:** Invoices provided by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry.

shows the average percentage of customers without power 30 days after landfall, which shows the need for generators in the hardest hit parishes.

Other commodities, such as bathroom, laundry, or shower trailers, also had to be acquired off-contract due to demand, despite having four pre-awarded emergency contracts for these items and one additional emergency contract for shower trailers for the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) shelters. Exhibit 4 summarizes the top categories of resources with a higher amount purchased from non-contract vendors than those with pre-awarded emergency contracts.

<sup>7</sup> Although GOHSEP management stated they track generator requests using another method besides WebEOC, it is unclear how many generators were actually needed from local governments using WebEOC, which is what OHSEP directors have access to, because the WebEOC system only allows for one category label to be selected when a local government enters a request. This can result in a generator being needed, but not selected as the category if it is included in a request for multiple items. Given this system limitation, it is possible that the number of generator requests is underestimated here.

<b>Exhibit 4</b>				
<b>Top 10 Categories with Higher Amounts Purchased from Non-Contracted Vendors</b>				
<b>As of March 3, 2022</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>Purchase Orders - Pre-Awarded State Contracts</b>	<b>Purchase Orders - Non-Contract Vendors</b>	<b>Total Purchases</b>	<b>% Difference</b>
Generators and generator service	\$1,595,366	\$9,720,763	\$11,316,129	509%
Ice	\$5,949,920	\$9,234,782	\$15,184,702	55%
Bathroom, shower, and laundry trailers	\$6,299,459	\$7,990,691	\$14,290,150	27%
Water tankers/trucks	\$121,021	\$5,842,100	\$5,963,121	4727%
Tarps	\$2,919,655	\$5,285,491	\$8,205,146	81%
Mass feeding*	**	\$1,032,460	\$1,032,460	N/A
Tents	\$161,000	\$841,736	\$1,002,736	423%
Storage tanks	**	\$476,495	\$476,495	N/A
Light towers	\$22,950	\$286,750	\$309,700	1149%
HVAC equipment	**	\$74,987	\$74,987	N/A
<p>*According to GOHSEP management, the state's contracted vendors for mass feedings would only take orders for mass sheltering operations.</p> <p>**Pre-awarded state contracts existed for these resources, but were not used.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Figures do not include supplies provided without purchase orders, such as generators provided by FEMA, or supplies with a purchase order issued by another state agency, such as emergency fuel ordered by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF).</p> <p><b>Source:</b> Prepared by legislative auditor's staff using data from La Gov.</p>				

**According to GOHSEP, some vendors may not submit bids for pre-awarded contracts because they know they can be paid a higher rate if they provide emergency services.** When the state awards contracts, price is typically the most important criterion for vendor selection. During a state of emergency, the need for resources may exceed the capacity of the pre-awarded contracts, and the state needs to seek alternative sources for these items. As a result, the state may end up paying more price per unit than what they are paying vendors in the pre-awarded emergency contracts because of the urgency of the request. This gives vendors an incentive not to enter into a pre-awarded emergency contract with the state.

**Recommendation 2:** GOHSEP should continue to work with OSP to determine how to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of resources most likely to be needed during future emergencies.

**Summary of Management's Response:** GOHSEP agrees with this recommendation and stated that it currently works with the Office of State Procurement (OSP) annually to review existing state contingency contracts to determine if updates are required prior to continuing the contracts or rebidding. In addition, immediately after a disaster or statewide emergency event, it works closely with the OSP to determine if additional contingency contracts are warranted. In addition to the established contracts,

OSP and GOHSEP maintain vendor resource lists to quickly expedite emergency bidding as needed. See Appendix A for GOHSEP's full response.

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**Between August 26, 2021, and December 9, 2021, GOHSEP received approximately 3,200 requests through WebEOC after Hurricane Ida, with the most common items requested being generators and fuel. However, because GOHSEP and other state Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) do not fully use status and date fields to document the progress of fulfilling resource requests, it is difficult to determine whether parishes received requested resources timely.**

GOHSEP uses a web-based Emergency Operations Center (WebEOC) system to manage requests for resources from parishes during a disaster once they have exhausted their local supply or when the item cannot be obtained locally. This application is used by multiple states and can be customized to meet each state's specific needs. During and after an emergency, the OHSEP director for each parish uses WebEOC to request needed items based on requests received from various sources including first responders, parish presidents, and municipalities within the parish. Once a request has been submitted via WebEOC, it is assigned to a State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) branch manager who reviews it for completeness and tasks the request to one or more ESFs<sup>8</sup> based on the type of resource being requested. For example, the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) is the lead agency for fuel, so LDAF is tasked to complete all resource requests for emergency fuel.

GOHSEP's After Action Reviews after Hurricane Isaac in 2012 recommended that users receive additional WebEOC training and that WebEOC show the current status of requested resources. AARs after the 2020 Hurricane Season also recommended that WebEOC should provide notifications to parishes on the status of requested resources.

**Source:** After Action Reviews provided by GOHSEP.

**From August 26, 2021, through December 9, 2021, GOHSEP received 3,224 requests for resources<sup>9</sup> with the most requested items being generators and fuel. However, because GOHSEP does not fully track the status and timeliness of resource requests, it is difficult to calculate how long it took parishes to receive the requested resources.** We obtained all WebEOC data for Hurricane Ida requests submitted from August 26, 2021 through December 9, 2021 to determine what types of resources parishes requested and whether these resources were received timely and analyzed all 3,005 of the closed requests. Exhibit 5 lists the ten parishes that submitted the most requests following Hurricane Ida that have been closed out by GOHSEP and the five most requested items by those parishes.

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<sup>8</sup> ESFs provide structure for coordinating state and federal inter-agency support in response to an emergency. These functions include search and rescue, communications, public health and medical services, firefighting etc. Agencies assigned one of these functions use LWIN to foster this coordination.

<sup>9</sup> As of December 9, 2021, 219 (6.7%) of the 3,224 requests made by OHSEP Directors and other ESF entities through WebEOC were still open. Examples of those that were still open included disaster recovery centers and communications.

<b>Exhibit 5</b>						
<b>Top 10 Parishes with Most Requests Closed Out* by GOHSEP After Hurricane Ida</b>						
<b>Most Requested Items</b>						
<b>Parish</b>	<b>Fuel</b>	<b>Generator</b>	<b>POD</b>	<b>Security</b>	<b>Transportation</b>	<b>Total (All Items)</b>
Terrebonne	16	55	11	18	14	256
Jefferson	3	18	3	11	15	167
Orleans	19	16	8	11	26	165
Tangipahoa	13	32	25	12	6	157
Lafourche	6	14	14	6	2	141
St. Charles	4	11	2	8	10	129
St. John the Baptist	1	5	7	5	12	125
Livingston	4	11	9	1	2	91
Plaquemines	8	8	4	3	6	82
St. Helena	0	6	7	3	1	50
<b>Top 10 Parish Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>1,363</b>
<b>Top 10 % of Total</b>	<b>30.0%</b>	<b>61.5%</b>	<b>61.2%</b>	<b>67.8%</b>	<b>44.5%</b>	<b>45.4%</b>
<b>Total Closed Requests</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>3,005</b>
* "Closed out" can mean the request was fulfilled, the request was canceled before fulfillment, or it was a duplicate request.						
Note: Ouachita Parish was actually number 10 in requested items, but was not one of the President's designated 25 parishes in his emergency declaration. The majority of its requests were shelter related.						
Source: Prepared by legislative auditor's staff using data from WebEOC.						

**Because of the way GOHSEP and other state ESFs use WebEOC, we were unable to easily calculate how long it took parishes to receive requested resources.** Although WebEOC contains date and status fields, GOHSEP instead uses comment logs to record the details of the progress of each resource request. WebEOC does contain a "Mission Status" field with a drop-down menu that GOHSEP uses to show the status of the requests, including "New Request," "At Branch Manager," "At Tasker," "Closed," or "Pending Recovery." However, the current status options do not include other important stages in the request fulfillment process, such as if the request is "In Procurement" by the vendor, "Delivered," or "Rejected or Cancelled." Including additional status options would provide more information to parishes about where the request is in the fulfillment process.

For example, according to the comments data field, one municipality requested a generator on August 31, 2021. However, WebEOC contains no other information regarding the status of this request, such as whether the generator was actually delivered and installed. The only additional information in WebEOC is a comment entered on September 4, 2021, stating that the generators were ready to be recovered. Using the comments field to track the progress of fulfilling requests makes it difficult for GOHSEP to evaluate its overall response times by parish. For example, in order to determine how long it took the state to provide generators to certain parishes, GOHSEP would have to read through the comments field in each request.

**Allowing local officials to have “view only” access to WebEOC, and setting up automatic notifications of status changes would improve efficiency and communication with parishes.**

Parish OHSEP directors are responsible for screening and entering requests from local officials (i.e., first responders, mayors, parish presidents, healthcare workers, etc.) into WebEOC for state assistance. These local officials generally do not have access to WebEOC. In both the survey results and during interviews, first responders consistently expressed frustration with the process of requesting resources and said that they felt their requests were questioned by parish OHSEP staff or that their requests were disregarded.<sup>10</sup> Parish OHSEP directors stated that giving local officials and first responders access to request resources through WebEOC may result in requests that are duplicative or unnecessary and may ultimately delay the receipt of requested resources. However, GOHSEP could grant “view only” WebEOC access to local officials and first responders so they can ensure that their requests were entered into WebEOC and also stay informed about the progress of their requests. This access would allow local officials to view their requests in WebEOC without having to rely on the parish OHSEP director to log in and provide them with an update.

Local officials (i.e., first responders, mayors, parish presidents, healthcare workers, etc.) stated that they do not have a way to easily track when requests in WebEOC will be delivered. According to the survey results, 5 of 10 (50%) sheriffs' offices stated they wanted access to WebEOC to ensure their requests are submitted to GOHSEP by the OHSEP directors.

Local officials also stated that having an alert function regarding their requests would also help them better track and manage requested items. Currently, officials must log in and check WebEOC to see if branch managers or other GOHSEP staff have updated the request. According to GOHSEP, WebEOC does have the capability of sending automatic notifications to parishes when the status of their request changes. This automatic notification coupled with the ability of local officials to view resource requests would help improve communication and efficiency.

**Although GOHSEP has provided training on WebEOC, it could also develop a user manual or guide to help local officials understand how to use the system.** GOHSEP has developed various documents, presentations, and instructions for parishes regarding how to use WebEOC. GOHSEP also has a YouTube channel that provides updates on WebEOC, but does not provide a comprehensive training to the user on how to use WebEOC. GOHSEP did say it will provide in-person training for parishes if they request it. In addition to training, GOHSEP should also develop a detailed user manual that parishes can refer to as needed, which would be especially beneficial for new staff. According to the After Action Review for Hurricane Ida, parishes had some staff members that were assigned to WebEOC for the first time, which required just-in-time training and delayed requests while staff members figured out how the system operated. Other states, such as New Hampshire, and counties in Florida, such as Palm Beach, have developed comprehensive user guides that provide detail on how they use WebEOC.

<sup>10</sup> We interviewed sheriffs in four of the affected parishes, as well as a fire chief in one parish and a representative from the Louisiana Sheriffs Association. Additionally, sheriffs' offices in 10 affected parishes responded to our survey.



**Recommendation 3:** GOHSEP should customize the WebEOC system to track the timeliness and status of local requests for resources so it can evaluate whether resources are delivered timely. This information could also be used to better estimate the needs of parishes for subsequent disasters.

**Summary of Management's Response:** GOHSEP agrees with this recommendation and stated that it will implement changes to the WebEOC system and the training process for users of the system to improving the tracking and reporting of parish requests. See Appendix A for GOHSEP's full response.

**Recommendation 4:** GOHSEP should consider setting up a notification function in WebEOC to notify users of the status of their request and when a request will be delivered.

**Summary of Management's Response:** GOHSEP agrees with this recommendation and stated that it will work with the vendor to implement notification functions as soon as this functionality is available and tested. See Appendix A for GOHSEP's full response.

**Recommendation 5:** GOHSEP should consider giving read-only access to local officials (i.e., first responders, mayors, parish presidents, healthcare workers, etc.) so they can track the status of their requests.

**Summary of Management's Response:** GOHSEP agrees in part with this recommendation and stated that it will work with GOHSEP's existing stakeholders to appropriately and incrementally increase the transparency and tracking of parish requests. This change requires careful coordination with its ESF partners, its parish partners and other key stakeholders to ensure that the required transparency avoids creating additional confusion or challenges. See Appendix A for GOHSEP's full response.

**Recommendation 6:** GOHSEP should develop a user manual and train all stakeholders, including OHSEP directors and local officials (i.e., first responders, mayors, parish presidents, healthcare workers, etc.) to ensure they are aware of WebEOC's capabilities during a declared disaster and how they can navigate the system to ensure they receive all requested items from the state.

**Summary of Management's Response:** GOHSEP agrees with this recommendation and stated that it will continue its practice of improving the level of WebEOC training for stakeholders across the state. See Appendix A for GOHSEP's full response.

**Louisiana experienced extensive power, internet, and cellular outages that made it difficult for local officials to communicate requests to GOHSEP. GOHSEP's backup system also failed, which further impacted parishes' abilities to respond to emergencies and request resources.**

Following Hurricane Katrina, GOHSEP established the Louisiana Wireless Information Network (LWIN) as a backup system to enable seamless communication among all responders to improve information sharing and systems. LWIN is available to authorized federal and state first responder agencies, local agencies, and other entities vital to the health, safety, and welfare of Louisiana citizens, such as the ESF agencies. Since fiscal year 2006, GOHSEP has received \$208.7 million in state general fund dollars and \$97.8 million in funds from federal and local governments to fund radios, infrastructure, and training for this system as shown in Exhibit 6.

<b>Exhibit 6 LWIN Funding Fiscal Years 2006 through 2021</b>		
<b>Expense Category</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Local/Federal</b>
Executive Staff	\$0	\$25,000
800/700MHz Radios	8,741,870	10,658,000
Infrastructure / Redundancy	68,902,393	85,793,973
Gateway Solutions	502,072	0
System Maintenance	130,592,776	0
Training/Exercises	0	1,317,706
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$208,739,111</b>	<b>\$97,794,679</b>
<b>Source:</b> Prepared by legislative auditor's staff using information provided by GOHSEP.		

**In our survey of parish OHSEP directors and local officials, 13 of 30 (43.3%) respondents to the question regarding LWIN noted that the LWIN system was not an effective means of communication when power and cellular communications are down.** During power outages, the LWIN system may go down because its lines need electricity to operate. As a result, parishes had to rely on other backup devices, such as handheld two-way radios and high-band radios to communicate. According to GOHSEP, another limitation of LWIN is that it relies on commercial carriers to operate. As a result, if the commercial carrier lines are down, LWIN will not work. Only 11 of 30 (36.7%)<sup>11</sup> respondents stated that LWIN was an effective means of communications during Hurricane Ida. According to GOHSEP, because AT&T and Motorola will no longer support T1 lines, the state will be transitioning to ethernet connections to upgrade the LWIN system which should resolve the majority of the communications issues. GOHSEP received a portion of this funding through a FY22 appropriation request, and the remaining amount is included in the FY23 supplemental budget bill.

<sup>11</sup> Six respondents of the 30 (20%) indicated that they were "Unsure/Did Not Know" whether LWIN was effective.

**Failure of the LWIN system and cellular outages interfered with the ability of parish governments to obtain needed resources through WebEOC and receive emergency calls.** For example, St. Mary and St. James Parishes stated that when they lost communication, they could no longer receive 911 emergency calls. Additionally, high wind speeds and severe weather conditions contributed to interruptions in cellular services and many parishes experienced significant outages, disrupting much of the state's communications. Some local officials we spoke with relied on alternative means of communications, such as high band or satellite radios, but not all parishes may be able to afford these additional backup sources. Exhibit 7 summarizes the top 10 parishes with the highest number of cellular outages on August 30, 2021, which may have contributed to the LWIN system outages, and Appendix E summarizes the number of cellular outages in all parishes included in the disaster declaration.

<b>Exhibit 7 Top 10 Outages in Cellular Service in Parishes Included in Disaster Declaration August 30, 2021</b>			
<b>Parish</b>	<b>Total Cell Sites</b>	<b>Cell Sites Out</b>	<b>Percentage Out</b>
Assumption	19	19	100.0%
Terrebonne	81	81	100.0%
Lafourche	78	76	97.4%
Plaquemines	56	50	89.3%
Tangipahoa	118	101	85.6%
Washington	55	42	76.4%
Livingston	121	89	73.6%
St. John the Baptist	27	19	70.4%
Jefferson	289	202	69.9%
St. Charles	41	26	63.4%
<b>Source:</b> Prepared by legislative auditor's staff using Federal Communications Commission (FCC) data.			

**Recommendation 7:** GOHSEP should work with the legislature to determine whether the state should secure funding to invest in additional alternatives to the LWIN system, such as high band or satellite radios, to assist with communications when other networks fail.

**Summary of Management's Response:** GOHSEP agrees with this recommendation and stated that it will work through the Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) to make recommendations to its stakeholders, to include the legislature, that continue to improve emergency communications across the state. See Appendix A for GOHSEP's full response.

**The state's Hurricane Ida Sheltering Program is moving more quickly than FEMA's housing program. As of February 15, 2022, 11,980 residents are housed in 4,166 housing units provided through the state's program compared to FEMA's program, which has only provided 1,107<sup>12</sup> housing units as of February 2022.**

According to GOHSEP, in order to provide housing to impacted residents more quickly than FEMA's housing assistance program (Direct Housing Program), the state implemented the Hurricane Ida Sheltering Program. On October 4, 2021, the Governor announced that GOHSEP would begin administering this program to provide temporary housing, such as travel trailers, to people in heavily impacted parishes where other sheltering options were currently unavailable. The state entered into a 12-month contract with APTIM Environmental & Infrastructure to administer the sheltering program for \$22.1 million.<sup>13</sup> GOHSEP has purchase orders with different vendors to provide different sheltering options, which may include hotels, base camps, crew barges or recreational vehicles (RVs), including travel trailers that typically hitch to an existing vehicle. These sheltering options can either be located on private property or on a group site. If the shelter is located at a group site, the occupant does not have to pay for utilities.

The state's **Hurricane Ida Sheltering Program** is offered in the most impacted Parishes –Lafourche, some communities in Jefferson, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, Plaquemines, and Terrebonne Parish. The program is designed to complement, not replace, other housing options such as travel trailers, hotels and mobile homes offered through FEMA.



Source: Picture taken by LLA staff.

As of March 3, 2022, the state has paid APTIM almost \$10 million of its \$22.1 million contract. As of this date, the state has spent \$226.9 million on this program and is expected to cost approximately \$282.8 million based on the purchase orders as of March 3, 2022 that have had expenditures<sup>14</sup>. Because this is an ongoing program, this number could also increase. Exhibit 8 summarizes the top 10 vendors with GOHSEP purchase orders for the Hurricane Ida Sheltering Program as of March 3, 2022 and Appendix F summarizes all vendors with purchase orders for this program.

<sup>12</sup> As of February 18, 2022, according to GOHSEP.

<sup>13</sup> The original contract amount was for \$9 million, but was amended to \$16 million on February 15, 2022 and then to \$22.1 million on March 15, 2022, due to increased requirement for existing scope of work. In addition, because this program was ongoing at the time of this audit, we did not evaluate APTIM's management of this program.

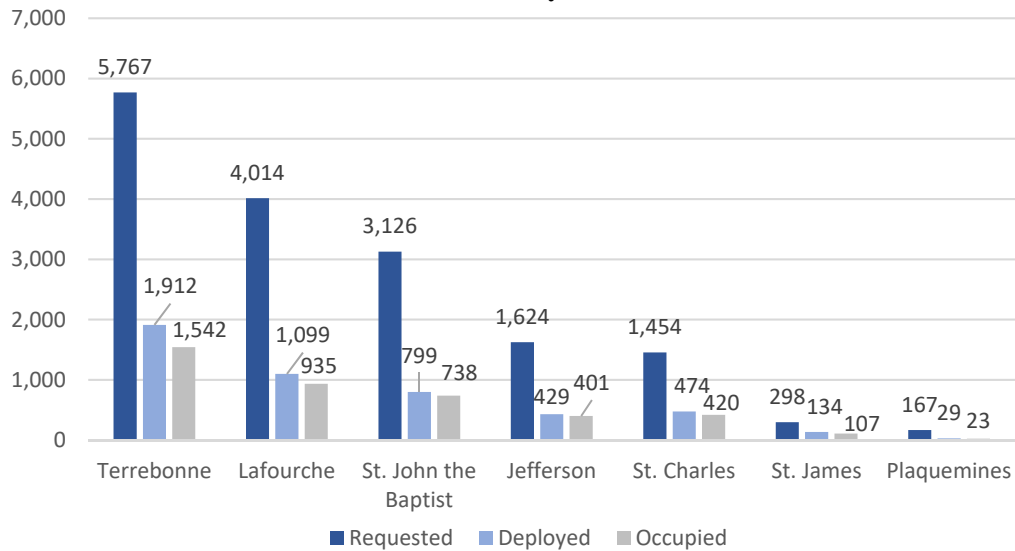
<sup>14</sup> It is unclear at this point in the process how much FEMA will reimburse the state.

**Exhibit 8**  
**Total Value of Purchase Orders and Expenses for Hurricane Ida Sheltering Program**  
**Vendors with Highest PO Value**  
**Amounts as of March 3, 2022**

Vendor	Vendor's Location	Item/Service	PO Value*	Amount Paid
1. Lamar Contractors, LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units, Delivery, & Installation	\$55,783,303	\$55,100,063
2. TKTMJ, Inc.	Louisiana	Housing Units, Delivery, & Installation	\$38,769,398	\$37,710,607
3. Lemoine Disaster Recovery, LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units	\$26,122,650	\$26,122,374
4. APTIM Environmental & Infrastructure, LLC**	Louisiana	Program Management	\$22,100,000	\$9,973,465
5. Montimber International, LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units, Delivery, & Installation	\$14,119,503	\$8,549,382
6. DMR Builders, LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units	\$14,086,692	\$11,530,795
7. Corporate Hospitality Services	Texas	Housing Units	\$13,172,814	\$8,190,414
8. Southern Logistical Showers & Provisions, LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units	\$11,673,622	\$11,673,622
9. Wit Contracting of Franklinton, LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units, Delivery, & Installation	\$10,623,041	\$8,654,577
10. Bowling Motors & RV Sales, Inc.	Iowa	Housing Units	\$10,415,307	\$9,059,307
<b>Total Amounts for Top 10 Vendors</b>			<b>\$216,866,330</b>	<b>\$186,564,606</b>
<b>Total Amounts for All Vendors</b>			<b>\$282,827,177</b>	<b>\$226,890,576</b>
* The Ida Sheltering Program is ongoing. Costs in this exhibit do not necessarily represent the final PO value for each vendor.				
**The PO Value for APTIM Environmental & Infrastructure, LLC was amended on March 15, 2022 to \$22.1 million.				
<b>Source:</b> Prepared by legislative auditor's staff using information provided by GOHSEP.				

**Louisiana's Hurricane Ida Sheltering Program is moving more quickly than FEMA's direct housing program.** According to GOHSEP, As of February 15, 2022, 11,980 residents are housed in 4,166 housing units. According to GOHSEP, as of February 18, 2022, FEMA's direct housing program has only provided 1,107 housing units for residents. Approximately 17,600 registrations have been received for Louisiana's Hurricane Ida Sheltering Program, and the state has purchased a total of 5,072 total housing units as of February 15, 2022. Although not all residents that registered will be eligible and some residents may make other arrangements or obtain housing from FEMA, the program will likely not meet the demand. In Terrebonne Parish alone, over 5,700 households registered for this program, but only 1,542 were in a structure granted as of this date. Exhibit 9 shows the requested housing units through the sheltering program compared to how many the state has deployed and are actually occupied as of February 15, 2022.

**Exhibit 9**  
**Requested, Deployed, and Occupied Housing Units**  
**Hurricane Ida Sheltering Program**  
**As of February 15, 2022**



**Source:** Prepared by legislative auditor's staff using information provided by GOHSEP.

**Because the Hurricane Ida Sheltering Program was implemented quickly, GOHSEP did not establish a process to prioritize applicant registrations to ensure the most impacted residents were given priority.** To apply to the program, residents must complete an application by phone, in person, or through GOHSEP's registration portal and provide various information, including if the applicant is in an eligible parish, if they are registered with FEMA, and the extent of damage to the home. According to GOHSEP, this program assists those who do not currently have "safe, secure, and habitable shelter" and residents located in the seven most impacted parishes. However, because of the speed with which the program was implemented, GOHSEP stated that it did not create prioritization criteria for who would be approved first for housing. According to GOHSEP management, while they tried to prioritize households with the most difficult circumstances using FEMA damage assessments, they admitted that this was not an optimal process and lacked criteria on how to determine a "difficult circumstance." In addition, GOHSEP said it prioritized applicants that had fully completed the application. If GOHSEP administers a similar program in the future, it should not only consider setting priorities to ensure the most impacted residents receive priority, but also design its intake system so that it can be matched to FEMA's system to facilitate information sharing for damage assessments.

**Better communication and management of expectations may have reduced the public's frustration over the speed of the program.** At the beginning of the program, local officials we interviewed stated that the housing program was not being implemented by GOHSEP timely. There were multiple housing units staged at two main locations awaiting distribution while residents did not have a place to live. However, according to GOHSEP, delivering the housing units to a resident's home required multiple steps including utility and water hook-up, and ensuring the property owner gave permission for the unit to be placed.

GOHSEP did not sufficiently communicate this process to the public to manage expectations on how quickly a resident could receive housing from this program.

**Recommendation 8:** If GOHSEP administers similar programs in the future, GOHSEP should consider developing criteria on how to prioritize registrations to ensure the most impacted residents are given priority for housing.

**Summary of Management's Response:** GOHSEP agrees with this recommendation and stated that it will work with GOHSEP's state, local, and Federal partners to improve the prioritization criteria to ensure any future implementation of a similar program retains the same focus on expediency while also improving clarity of these criteria. See Appendix A for GOHSEP's full response.





## **APPENDIX A: MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE**



**Governor's Office of Homeland Security  
and Emergency Preparedness  
State of Louisiana**

JOHN BEL EDWARDS  
GOVERNOR



CASEY TINGLE  
DIRECTOR

DIR-2022-0321-026

March 22, 2022

Michael J. "Mike" Waguespack, Legislative Auditor  
Louisiana Legislative Auditor  
P.O. Box 94397  
Baton Rouge, La 70804-9397

RE: Audit Title: Hurricane Ida Preparation and Response  
Audit Report Number: 40210023

Dear Mr. Waguespack:

I have reviewed the recommendations in the letter dated March 15, 2022 from your office, which covers activities of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) in its for Hurricane Ida Preparation and Response. Hurricane Ida made landfall on August 29, 2021 as a strong Category 4 storm near Port Fourchon and total insured losses are estimated to be \$36 billion. The scale and intensity of Hurricane Ida created a number of challenges for our state and resulted in extensive damages to thousands of homes, widespread utility outages, and extensive damage to infrastructure. Most sadly, 30 deaths within our state were connected to Hurricane Ida and thousands of families have been impacted by the stressful and complicated process of recovery. Our state has been further challenged by the fact that of the 3 strongest storms to make landfall in recorded history, 2 occurred in the past two years. In light of these challenges and impacts, the emergency management enterprise across our state demonstrated significant capabilities and timely response. The people, processes, and partnership supporting our state's emergency management efforts have been rightly recognized by many as setting a standard for others to follow. I want to thank the GOHSEP team for their leadership and dedication through these difficult challenges and to recognize the tremendous support of our state, local and Federal partners. That said, emergency management is not an exact science and requires continuous improvement. I want to thank you for the engagement and skillful work of your team in helping to identify and clarify opportunities for improvement. What follows is my response to the feedback and findings provided by your team and a commitment to ensure our team focuses on implementing these improvements.

**Finding 1:** While GOHSEP reviewed most parish Emergency Operation Plans (EOPs) timely, parishes did not always include important components in these plans. For example, in the most recent reviews of EOPs, GOHSEP found that 17 of the 25 (68%)

parishes did not identify fuel requirements for first responders and 13 (52%) did not identify who was responsible for staffing and managing Points of Distribution (PODs). However, GOHSEP does not have the authority to mandate that parishes include missing components in their EOPs.

**Recommendation 1:** *GOHSEP should work with the legislature to consider giving GOHSEP the statutory authority to require parishes to revise their EOP plans to include any missing components of their plan.*

- GOHSEP management **concurs** in this finding.
- **Management Details:** GOHSEP will work with the legislature to review and consider updating current law to update requirements for parish Emergency Operation Plans and the GOHSEP review process.

**Finding 2:** Pre-awarded emergency contracts were not always sufficient to meet the demand for resources after Hurricane Ida. In many cases, the state had to find additional contractors after the storm, which were often costlier, in order to meet the demand. For example, GOHSEP paid \$1.6 million for generators from pre-awarded emergency contract vendors, but paid additional vendors approximately \$9.7 million for generators because of insufficient supply.

**Recommendation 2:** *GOHSEP should continue to work with OSP to determine how to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of resources most likely to be needed during future emergencies.*

- GOHSEP management **concurs** in this finding.
- **Management Details:** Currently GOHSEP works with the Office of State Procurement (OSP) annually to review existing State contingency contracts to determine if updates are required prior to continuing the contracts or rebidding. In addition immediately after a disaster or statewide emergency event, we work closely with the OSP to determine if additional contingency contracts are warranted. In addition to the established contracts, the OSP and GOHSEP maintain vendor resource lists to quickly expedite emergency bidding as needed.

As a point of reference, GOHSEP does not oversee all current emergency contracts as many are handled by other State agencies as part of their Emergency Support Function responsibilities.

**Finding 3:** Between August 26, 2021 and December 9, 2021, GOHSEP received approximately 3,200 requests through WebEOC after Hurricane Ida, with the most common items requested being generators and fuel. However, because GOHSEP and other state ESFs do not fully use status and date fields to document the progress of

fulfilling resource requests, it is difficult to determine whether parishes received requested resources timely.

**Recommendation 3:** *GOHSEP should customize the WebEOC system to track the timeliness and status of local requests for resources so it can evaluate whether resources are delivered timely. This information could also be used to better estimate the needs of parishes for subsequent disasters.*

- GOHSEP management **concurs** in this finding.
- **Management Details:** GOHSEP agrees to implement changes to the WebEOC system and the training process for users of the system to improving the tracking and reporting of parish requests.

**Recommendation 4:** *GOHSEP should consider setting up a notification function in WebEOC to notify users of the status of their request and when a request will be delivered.*

- GOHSEP management **concurs** in this finding.
- **Management Details:** GOHSEP agrees to work with the vendor to implement notification functions as soon as this functionality is available and tested.

**Recommendation 5:** *GOHSEP should consider giving read-only access to local officials (i.e., first responders, mayors, parish presidents, healthcare workers, etc.) so they can track the status of their requests.*

- GOHSEP management **concurs in part** with this finding.
- **Management Details:** GOHSEP agrees to work with our existing stakeholders to appropriately and incrementally increase the transparency and tracking of parish requests. This change requires careful coordination with our ESF partners, our parish partners and other key stakeholders to ensure that the required transparency avoids creating additional confusion or challenges.

**Recommendation 6:** *GOHSEP should develop a user manual and train all stakeholders, including OHSEP directors and local officials (i.e., first responders, mayors, parish presidents, healthcare workers, etc.) to ensure they are aware of WebEOC's capabilities during a declared disaster and how they can navigate the system to ensure they receive all requested items from the state.*

- GOHSEP management **concurs** in this finding.

- **Management Details:** GOHSEP agrees to continue our practice of improving the level of WebEOC training for stakeholders across the state.

**Finding 4:** Louisiana experienced extensive power, internet, and cellular outages that made it difficult for local officials to communicate requests to GOHSEP. GOHSEP's backup system also failed, which further impacted parishes' abilities to respond to emergencies and request resources.

**Recommendation 7:** *GOHSEP should work with the legislature to determine whether the state should secure funding to invest in additional alternatives to the LWIN system, such as high band or satellite radios, to assist with communications when other networks fail.*

- GOHSEP management **concurs** in this finding.
- **Management Details:** GOHSEP agrees to work through the Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) to make recommendations to our stakeholders, to include the legislature, that continue to improve emergency communications across our state.

**Finding 5:** The state's Hurricane Ida Sheltering Program is moving more quickly than FEMA's housing program. As of February 15, 2022, 11,980 residents are housed in 4,166 housing units provided through the state's program compared to FEMA's program, which has only provided 1,107 trailers.

**Recommendation 8:** *If GOHSEP administers similar programs in the future, GOHSEP should consider developing criteria on how to prioritize registrations to ensure the most impacted residents are given priority for housing.*

- GOHSEP management **concurs** in this finding.
- **Management Details:** GOHSEP agrees to work with our state, local, and Federal partners to improve the prioritization criteria to ensure any future implementation of a similar program retains the same focus on expediency while also improving clarity of these criteria.

GOHSEP appreciates the meaningful feedback and cooperation from you and your staff. Should you have any questions regarding the response to the four observations, please contact me at (225) 925-73415 or by email at [Casey.Tingle@la.gov](mailto:Casey.Tingle@la.gov).

Sincerely,



Casey Tingle

cc: Christina Dayries, Deputy Director  
Christopher Guilbeaux, Assistant Deputy Director, Emergency Management





## APPENDIX B: SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

This report provides the results of our performance audit of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP). We conducted this performance audit under the provisions of Title 24 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, as amended. This audit covered the period of August 26, 2021, through February 15, 2022. Our audit objective was:

**Objective: To evaluate GOHSEP's preparation for and response to Hurricane Ida.**

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. To answer our objective, we reviewed internal controls relevant to the audit objective and performed the following audit steps:

- Met with GOHSEP staff to gain understanding of disaster preparation and response activities.
- Reviewed Governor Edwards' memo to President Biden which named the 25 parishes in the declared disaster area and President Biden's Disaster Declaration for the 25 parishes.
- Reviewed the Louisiana Homeland Security and Emergency Assistance and Disaster Act, the Louisiana Elected Officials Emergency Management Manual, FEMA's National Incident Management System guide, and Louisiana's Emergency Support Functions (ESFs).
- Interviewed parish OHSEP directors, parish presidents, and sheriffs to gather information regarding experiences with preparation, response, and recovery during Hurricane Ida.
- Conducted survey of OHSEP directors, parish presidents, and sheriffs to obtain information regarding GOHSEP's preparation and response to Hurricane Ida, as well as to gain an understanding of what worked well and areas in need of improvement.
- Obtained the Emergency Operation Plans (EOPs) for the declared disaster parishes and GOHSEP's reviews of these plans, the 2019 Parish Emergency Operations Plan Update Guidance, and GOHSEP's Local Emergency

Management Plan Technical Review Schedule. Summarized GOHSEP's review process and plan requirements for these plans.

- Researched and summarized Louisiana Office of State Procurement (OSP) and FEMA procurement guidelines for state agencies and local governmental and political subdivisions.
- Received purchase orders for state housing program and performed a judgmental selection of 80 of the 140 pre-awarded emergency contracts to include different types of requested commodities, including all fuel, generator, and support trailer contracts, requested by the impacted parishes. We determined location of vendors, purchase order amounts, and summarized services provided. The results of these were not intended to be projected to the entire population of pre-awarded emergency contracts.
- Obtained fuel invoices from the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry and calculated the cost of fuel for the month directly following Hurricane Ida. This cost does not reflect the fuel credits the State may have.
- Obtained purchase order amounts and expenditures from Louisiana's LaGov Enterprise Resource Planning system as of March 3, 2022, from GOHSEP.
- Researched and evaluated the use of the Louisiana Wireless Information Network (LWIN). Reviewed Louisiana's Interoperability Plan and determined requirements for backup communications.
- Obtained cellular outage information from the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) website to determine percentage of residents impacted on August 30, 2021.
- Gathered and summarized data from Public Service Commission regarding power outages in Ida-affected parishes.
- Reviewed GOHSEP's web-based Emergency Operations Center (WebEOC) data and analyzed the system's ability to track resource requests. Assessed the reliability of WebEOC data, particularly in regard to fields that could be used to determine the timeliness of supply requests. For the purposes and objective of this audit, it can be concluded that the WebEOC data are generally reliable. We also tested the reliability of WebEOC data by performing a judgmental selection of WebEOC requests for most-requested commodities, and obtained copies of purchase orders and invoices to match against WebEOC request entries. We determined the data was reliable for our purposes.
- Requested and reviewed information from Texas, Florida, and New Hampshire regarding their use of WebEOC, including review of WebEOC user guides and emergency procurement procedures.

- Obtained GOHSEP's After Action Reviews for Hurricanes Katrina/Rita and subsequent hurricanes and compared issues noted across reviews.
- Obtained and summarized data from GOHSEP regarding the state's Hurricane Ida Sheltering Program and compared the speed of this program compared to FEMA's direct housing assistance program. We also reviewed and summarized all purchase orders for this program.
- Sent the report to GOHSEP for feedback.



## APPENDIX C: EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTIONS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES

ESF	Example Responsibilities	State Agencies Responsible
<b>ESF-1 Transportation</b>	Evacuation and re-entry; transportation	Department of Transportation and Development
<b>ESF-2 Communications</b>	Emergency communications restoration; coordination of Federal/State/Local communications resources; LWIN maintenance/restoration	GOHSEP, Louisiana State Police, Louisiana National Guard
<b>ESF-3 Public Works &amp; Engineering</b>	Debris and wreckage removal; levee support; roadway maintenance	Department of Transportation and Development, Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority
<b>ESF-4 Firefighting</b>	Firefighting structural, forest, rural, and wooded area fires; fire investigations	State Fire Marshal, Department of Agriculture and Forestry
<b>ESF-5 Emergency Management</b>	Emergency Management Assistance Compact; multi-agency coordination; tribal matters; generator support	GOHSEP
<b>ESF-6 Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, &amp; Human Services</b>	Sheltering Operations; mass feeding; long/short term housing, disaster SNAP benefits (DSNAP)	Department of Child and Family Services, Louisiana Workforce Commission
<b>ESF-7 Logistics, Management, &amp; Resource Support</b>	Points of Distribution (PODs); commodity distribution	GOHSEP, Louisiana National Guard
<b>ESF-8 Public Health &amp; Medical Services</b>	Medical and health needs; special needs shelters; ambulances	Louisiana Department of Health
<b>ESF-9 Search &amp; Rescue</b>	Search and rescue; water rescue	State Fire Marshal, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
<b>ESF-10 Oil &amp; Hazardous Materials Response</b>	HAZMAT; air quality	Department of Environmental Quality, Louisiana State Police, Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office
<b>ESF-11 Agriculture and Natural Resources</b>	Animal response and relief; pet evacuation and sheltering; emergency fuel; agricultural needs	Department of Agriculture and Forestry

<b>ESF</b>	<b>Example Responsibilities</b>	<b>State Agencies Responsible</b>
<b>ESF-12 Energy</b>	Oil and gas pipelines; utility services; drinking water	Department of Natural Resources, Louisiana Public Service Commission, Louisiana Department of Health
<b>ESF-13 Public Safety &amp; Security</b>	Security; traffic control; public safety and law enforcement; prison evacuations	Louisiana State Police, Department of Justice
<b>ESF-14 Long-term Community Recovery &amp; Mitigation</b>	Disaster recovery; preliminary damage assessments for Public Assistance and Individual Assistance	GOHSEP
<b>ESF-15 External Affairs</b>	Media and community relations	GOHSEP
<b>ESF-16 Military Support &amp; Civil Authorities</b>	Support all ESF activities	Louisiana National Guard
<b>ESF-17 Cybersecurity</b>	Preparation; identification and classification; containment; eradication; recovery and remediation	Division of Administration, Louisiana National Guard
<b>Source:</b> Prepared by legislative auditor's staff using information from GOHSEP's website.		

## APPENDIX D: EMERGENCY CONTRACTS BY CATEGORY AS OF JANUARY 31, 2022\*

Category	Contracts	Category	Contracts
Air Conditioning Units	3	Infant Formula, Bottles, and Nipples	3
Ambulance and EMS Shelter Support (LDH)**	5	Light Towers	2
Animal Cages and Supplies	1	Linen and Laundry Services (DCFS)**	3
Armed Guards (DPS)**	4	Mass Feeding	10
Base Camp Equipment	2	Meals Ready to Eat (MREs)	4
Base Camps	5	Medical Waste Disposal	2
Bathroom, Shower, and Laundry Trailers	4	Oxygen Supplies	3
Bottled Water and Sports Drinks	4	Pet Transport	2
Containers, Toilets, and Handwashing Stations	4	Portable Buildings (DOTD)**	1
Cots	1	Portable Storage Units	3
Debris Removal (DOTD)**	1	Potable Water Tankers	1
DSNAP Stations (DCFS)**	4	PPE	2
Emergency Alerts and Notifications	2	Pumps	5
Emergency Planning/Training (DOTD)**	1	Push Packages for PODs	1
Emergency Support Staff	1	Remediation Services	4
Facility Maintenance and Repairs	3	Safety and Traffic	1
Financial Advisory Services (DOTD)**	1	Sand	1
Flood Barriers	5	Sand	2
Forklifts and Pallet Jacks	2	Sand Bags	1
Fuel and Fuel Storage	1	Shelter Operations (DCFS)**	1
Gabions	1	Shower Trailers (DCFS)**	1
Generators	2	Specialty Transportation (LDH)**	1
Helicopter Reconnaissance	1	Staging and Distribution (LDH)**	2
Helicopter Services	1	Surge Medical Transportation (LDH)**	1
Hospital Beds	3	Temporary Medical Staffing (LDH)**	3
HVAC Equipment Rentals	2	Transportation Services (DOTD)**	1
Ice	3	Tree Removal	2
Ice (GOHSEP)**	4	Truck Driver Rental Packages	5
Industrial Equipment (General)	1	<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>

\*Some emergency contracts active during Hurricane Ida may have expired before this audit began, and other contracts have been awarded since Hurricane Ida. All contracts in this exhibit were active on January 31, 2022.

\*\*Contracts are agency-specific instead of statewide for all agencies to use; agencies are noted in parentheses.

**Source:** Prepared by legislative auditor's staff using information from OSP's electronic catalog of state contracts.





**APPENDIX E: OUTAGES IN CELLULAR SERVICE IN PARISHES  
INCLUDED IN DISASTER DECLARATION  
AUGUST 30, 2021**

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Total Cell Sites</b>	<b>Cell Sites Out</b>	<b>% Cell Out</b>
Ascension	88	55	62.5%
Assumption	19	19	100.0%
East Baton Rouge	360	216	60.0%
East Feliciana	27	12	44.4%
Iberia	46	1	2.2%
Iberville	42	19	45.2%
Jefferson	289	202	69.9%
Lafourche	78	76	97.4%
Livingston	121	89	73.6%
Orleans	348	185	53.2%
Plaquemines	56	50	89.3%
Pointe Coupee	25	15	60.0%
St. Bernard	36	13	36.1%
St. Charles	41	26	63.4%
St. Helena	13	5	38.5%
St. James	33	14	42.4%
St. John the Baptist	27	19	70.4%
St. Martin	48	2	4.2%
St. Mary	56	18	32.1%
St. Tammany	260	152	58.5%
Tangipahoa	118	101	85.6%
Terrebonne	81	81	100.0%
Washington	55	42	76.4%
West Baton Rouge	32	11	34.4%
West Feliciana	28	9	32.1%

**Source:** Prepared by legislative auditor's staff using FCC data.



## APPENDIX F: TOTAL VALUE OF PURCHASE ORDERS FOR IDA SHELTERING PROGRAM AS OF MARCH 3, 2022

Vendor	Vendor's Location	Items/Services	Purchase Order (PO) Value*
Airware Transportation and Logistics	Louisiana	Delivery and Installation	\$1,379,280
Allco LLC	Texas	Housing Units	\$2,196,078
American Native Veterans of LA LLC	Louisiana	Maintenance and Repairs	\$314,497
APTIM Environmental & Infrastructure	Louisiana	Program Management	\$22,100,000
Bent's RV Rendezvous LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units	\$13,172,814
Blue Bayou Water Park LLC	Louisiana	Staging/Installation Areas	\$22,700
Bowling Motors & RV Sales Inc	Iowa	Housing Units	\$10,415,307
BP Carriage Cove LA 2021 LLC	Virginia**	Staging/Installation Areas	\$33,320
Corporate Hospitality Services	Texas	Housing Units	\$14,119,503
Crosby Energy Services Inc	Louisiana	Delivery and Installation	\$643,555
Diamond Scaffold Services LLC	Alabama	Housing Units	\$6,028,708
Dirks Companies LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units, Maintenance, and Repairs	\$3,173,006
DMR Builders LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units	\$11,673,622
DSW Homes LLC	Texas	Maintenance and Repairs	\$19,250
Dynamic Group LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units, Delivery, and Installation	\$2,904,181
Excel Contractors LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units, Maintenance, and Repairs	\$7,985,105
I-49 Trailer and RVs Inc	Louisiana	Housing Units	\$883,257
Jean Lafitte Harbor LLC	Louisiana	Staging/Installation Areas	\$46,500
Josh Jambon	Louisiana	Staging/Installation Areas	\$90,000
JWTC-Louisiana LLC	Texas	Delivery and Installation	\$1,740,551
Kam Inc of Corbin	Kentucky	Housing Units, Maintenance, and Repairs	\$772,435
Lamar Contractors LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units, Delivery, and Installation	\$55,783,303
Lemoine Disaster Recovery LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units	\$26,122,650
Magnolia RV Park LLC	Louisiana	Staging/Installation Areas	\$27,600
Montimber International LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units, Delivery, and Installation	\$14,086,692
Peterson Living Rentals LLC	Louisiana	Staging/Installation Areas	\$40,000
Quaternary Resource Investigations	Louisiana	Delivery and Installation	\$1,103,293
Regional Enterprises LLC	Mississippi	Housing Units	\$4,944,768
Rising Hill LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units	\$454,894
SLSCO Ltd	Texas	Housing Units, Delivery, and Installation	\$2,910,752

<b>Vendor</b>	<b>Vendor's Location</b>	<b>Items/Services</b>	<b>Purchase Order (PO) Value*</b>
Southern Coast Supply	Louisiana	Staging/Installation Areas	\$7,788,768
Southern Logistical Showers & Provisions LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units	\$9,987,500
Stafford Act & Disaster Recovery	Nevada	Delivery and Installation	\$1,139,699
Sugar Hill LLC	Louisiana	Staging/Installation Areas	\$105,000
Timberline Construction Group LLC	Alabama	Delivery and Installation	\$365,053
TKTMJ Inc	Louisiana	Housing Units, Delivery, and Installation	\$38,769,398
Vantage Contractors LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units	\$7,785,921
VSRS Services LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units	\$142,500
Windstorm Mitigation Inc	Louisiana	Housing Units, Delivery, and Installation	\$932,677
Wit Contracting of Franklinton LLC	Louisiana	Housing Units, Delivery, and Installation	\$10,623,041
<b>Total PO Value for all Vendors</b>			<b>\$282,827,177</b>
<b>Percent of LA Vendors</b>	<b>70.0%</b>		
<b>Percent Total PO for LA Sheltering Vendors</b>	<b>84.2%</b>		
<p>*Since the Ida Sheltering Program is ongoing, the costs in this exhibit do not represent the final PO amount for each vendor.  **Vendor is located in Virginia, but the property being leased is in Houma, Louisiana.  <b>Note:</b> Does not include no-cost agreements for housing unit staging areas or no-cost agreement for installation sites.  <b>Source:</b> Prepared by legislative auditor's staff using information provided by GOHSEP and from La Gov.</p>			