

## **Long-Term Recovery Group (LTRG) Frequently Asked Questions**

*This document attempts to briefly address some FAQs related to the formation and operation of “unmet needs” committees, often called Long-Term Recovery Groups (LTRGs).*

**What is a LTRG?** LTRGs are groups of local voluntary, faith-based, and community organizations that join together to address the disaster-related unmet needs of individuals and households.

**Why encourage the community to develop a LTRG?** There are many reasons that LTRGs are important, including: (1) no one program can meet all the disaster-related recovery needs of the hardest impacted individuals and families, (2) collaboration among organizations increases capacity and efficiency as additional helping resources are brought to the table, (3) communities with LTRGs respond to and recover from disaster faster and more effectively, (4) additional donated recovery funds may only be available if the community follows the LTRG model, (5) emergency management gains another “arrow for the quiver,” and (6) case management plans normally depend on having LTRGs. LTRGs provide a way for local agencies and organizations to lead the recovery process.

**Who makes up a LTRG (with examples)?** Local houses of worship (First Baptist Church), large denominational groups (United Methodist Committee on Relief), community services (Commission on Aging), social and human services (Catholic Charities and/or housing authorities). These groups represent the local capacity to bring resources to the table and then lead the effort to manage external donated and external service organizations.

**What roles do people fill in the LTRG?** The local board manages the LTRG, votes on the expenditure of “pooled” funds, and manages external resources such as national level agencies offering to help. The case managers meet with clients, assess their recovery needs and present the case to the board. Additional partners such as emergency management, housing authorities, FEMA and others bring either local expertise and/or resources to the table and advise the board.

**What role does local Emergency Management play on the LTRG?** The very best LTRGs have local EMs providing advice and guidance on a consistent basis; EMs understand response and recovery and especially, the local situation. However, since LTRGs are led by faith-based, voluntary, and community organizations, Emergency Management does not sit on the board. At the least, EMs should be kept informed of the progress of the LTRG, informed of challenges the group faces, and also should prepare the LTRG to be a resource during the next response and recovery event.

**How does the group find clients?** Normally it takes more than one method to reasonably ensure that all potential clients have been identified. The LTRG can make a formal request to FEMA to share client contact information. The LTRG can advertise and provide a phone number for people to call. The LTRG can find resources to go door-to-door in impacted areas.

**How does a case get worked at the meetings?** The case manager will present a family’s need and groups around the table will identify areas they can help. For example, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance may say that they have a labor team available to hang drywall while the local First Baptist Church says they can pay for half the drywall if the client pays for half. If no group commits to addressing the need, the board may choose to spend funds from the budget that has been donated to the LTRG but is not controlled by any one organization.

**Where can one get advice about LTRGs?** The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), State or Local VOAD, the United Way, FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaisons, and others can all be resources for your community.