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THESIS

**META-LEADERSHIP IN A MEGA DISASTER: A CASE
STUDY OF GOVERNOR HALEY BARBOUR'S
LEADERSHIP DURING HURRICANE KATRINA**

by

Lee Wallace Smithson

December 2014

Thesis Advisor:
Second Reader:

Lauren Wollman
Lauren Fernandez

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GOVERNOR HALEY BARBOUR'S LEADERSHIP DURING HURRICANE
KATRINA**

Lee Wallace Smithson
B.A., Tulane University, 1984
Master of Strategic Studies, U.S. Army War College, 2008

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December 2014**

Author: Lee Wallace Smithson

Approved by: Lauren Wollman
Thesis Advisor

Lauren Fernandez
Second Reader

Mohammed Hafez
Chair, Department of National Security

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ABSTRACT

The complexities of leadership in today's environment are often obscured by the focus of traditional theories on leadership as the top-down, leader-subordinate construct typical of hierarchical organizations. These theories also do not fully capture what occurs when leaders must catalyze action well above and beyond their formal lines of decision making and control. Leaders today must simultaneously lead "down" in the traditional sense, "up" to influence the people or organizations to which they are accountable, and "across" to activate peer groups and others with whom there is no formal subordinate relationship, and that these activities are parts of an integrated whole. This leadership model is referred to as "meta-leadership."

This thesis asked, to what extent is Governor Haley Barbour's response to and decision making during Hurricane Katrina an example of meta-leadership? What can be learned as far as smart practices from Barbour's leadership and can these practices be replicated? The focus of this thesis was the conduct of a single case study. Governor Haley Barbour's leadership style and decision-making process during Hurricane Katrina response operations were examined to determine whether or to what extent they accord with the theory of meta-leadership. Our conclusions are that Governor Barbour epitomized the tenets of meta-leadership and that, given the proper academic environment, meta-leadership can be replicated.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AL	Alabama
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
CDT	Central Daylight Time
CEO	chief executive officer
CRTC	Combat Readiness Training Center
DLA	Defense Logistics Agency
DOD	Department of Defense
EF	Enhanced Fujita
FDNY	Fire Department New York
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FL	Florida
HUD	housing and urban development
KSRF	Katrina School Relief Fund
LA	Louisiana
MDA	Mississippi Development Authority
MDES	Mississippi Department of Employment Services
MEMA	Mississippi Emergency Management Agency
MS	Mississippi
MSWIN	Mississippi Wireless Integrated Network
MRE	meal ready to eat
MSBA	Mississippi School Boards Association
NEG	National Emergency Grant
NGO	non-governmental organization
SERT-A	State Emergency Response Team—Advance
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

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Finally, to the people of Mississippi who were the real heroes of the greatest natural disaster to strike our nation. Your perseverance and dedication to our state are why I love being a Mississippian. From tornadoes to floods to hurricanes, the people of our state have always been there for one another. I am proud that in some way I was able to tell your story.

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PREFACE

In April 2005, I returned from a year in Baghdad and was appointed the Director of Military Support for the Mississippi National Guard. I was responsible for the planning, coordinating and deploying of National Guard troops in support of a gubernatorial call-out in Mississippi. These call-outs include terrorist events, natural disasters, and man-made disasters.

Over the course of the next six years, Mississippi was struck by numerous disasters. Hurricane Katrina, an Enhanced Fujita (EF) 4 tornado in 2010, Deep Water Horizon Oil Spill throughout the summer of 2010, two EF-5 tornados in 2011, and the Mississippi River Flood in summer 2011 still represent some of the most significant disasters to hit our nation. In each of these disasters, the Mississippi National Guard was activated to assist first responders in response, relief, and recovery efforts. As a guardsman, I had the opportunity to work for and observe the leadership of Mississippi Governor Haley R. Barbour. Governor Barbour rose to the challenges of each of these monumental catastrophes with leadership, intelligence, and confidence—the qualities needed to govern in times of crisis. As I began my journey to choose a topic for my thesis, I continually returned to the leadership acumen of the governor. I realized that there have been few examinations of leadership traits in elected officials during catastrophic disasters. In today's political environment, voters tend to elect politicians based on their party's platform or on the charisma of the leader. How many times have leaders been elected based on their well-defined leadership skills, especially in situations that were catastrophic in nature? When an event happens, the electorate and media expect the leader impacted by the event will know exactly how to react, develop a response plan, and lead the response plan.

Hurricane Katrina was the worst natural disaster in terms of economic impact to ever strike the United States. To many Americans, Hurricane Katrina marks a low point in disaster response and recovery. Few have ever spoken about the many positive outcomes in the aftermath of a disaster that killed 1,833 Americans and caused over \$108 billion in damages, roughly four times the damage wrought by Hurricane Andrew.

Hurricane Katrina struck in the early morning hours of August 29. For the next two months, I worked alongside thousands of National Guardsmen, active duty Soldiers, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) officials, police officers, fire fighters, and everyday Americans responding to the greatest natural disaster in terms of economic impact in our nation's history. The entire Gulf Coast was destroyed. Over 60,000 homes in the southern part of the state were destroyed, and 238 Mississippians perished in the storm.

Given the horrible conditions during the response and recovery phases, the leadership displayed by Governor Haley Barbour served as an example of what a leader must do during a catastrophic event. His actions and decisions in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina clearly needed to be studied. However, this study needed to be more than simply a biography of a leader. Governor Barbour's leadership style needed to be examined to determine if his methods can be taught.

There are dissenters who say that Governor Barbour's actions and decisions during the response to Hurricane Katrina were politically motivated, and he was determined to help the wealthy at the expense of low-income residents. His decision to allocate over \$400 million to rebuilding the Port of Gulfport drew particular scrutiny.¹ Opponents to this decision believed that the funding should have been directed to the construction of low-income housing and other programs to assist the poor. However, almost a decade after the storm, the Mississippi Gulf Coast has emerged more economically sound, with a greater population, higher student test scores, and a rebuilt infrastructure. Governor Barbour's vision and experience as a seasoned politician clearly led to more good than bad decisions.

As I began the research for this project, I discovered the theory of meta-leadership. Meta-leaders are leaders whose scope of thinking, influence, and accomplishment extend far beyond their formal or expected bounds of authority. This leadership theory was developed by Harvard professors Leonard Marcus, Isaac

¹ Spencer S. Hsu, "Mississippi Groups Sue HUD, Objecting to Use of Katrina Aid for Port," *Washington Post*, December 11, 2008, accessed November 03, 2014, http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P2-19622992.html?refid=easy_hf

Ashkenazi, Barry Dorn, and Joseph Henderson, who built it from elements of existing leadership models.²

As I read their work, I realized that this version of leadership nested with the leadership traits of Governor Barbour during the response and recovery phases of Hurricane Katrina. Since Marcus et al.'s concept of leadership lacked a case study that would epitomize their theory, I decided to develop a thesis using case study methodologies to the leadership theory known as meta-leadership. This is a single case study that examines the decisions made by Governor Barbour during Hurricane Katrina. The process to develop this case study was through direct interviews with the governor and from researching various articles, journals, government publications, and books about Katrina. It should be noted that this thesis only focuses on the response activities in Mississippi.

² Leonard J. Marcus, Barry C. Dorn, and Joseph M. Henderson, "The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership," in *National Preparedness Initiative*, Cambridge, MA: Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, 2008), <http://npli.sph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2013/04/Meta-leadership-Distribution.pdf>, 1.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The complexities of leadership in today's environment are often obscured by the focus of traditional theories on leadership as the top-down, leader-subordinate construct typical of hierarchical organizations. During the course of their research, Marcus et al. found that approximately 85 percent of the existing leadership literature assumed a hierarchical leadership structure.¹ Additionally, the authors discovered that many leadership theories dealt with a single level of process because it is difficult to develop multi-level theory. A single level process does not integrate all disciplines of response operations or the behavior of individuals, groups or organizations as a whole. Multi-level reality, they posit, is what many leaders face. The traditional boss-to-employee relationship has been formalized in clear roles, authority structure, rules, job descriptions, and responsibilities that prescribe performance and productivity expectations. Many relationships that are critical to leadership success, though, are not so structured. Theories of matrix organizations look at cross-functional relationships but generally within a single organization. All of these are valuable, but none is sufficient to explain the multiplicity of challenges that a leader faces today.

The events of September 11, 2001 (9/11) are examples of the multiplicity of challenges that serve as a catalyst for new standards in leadership in disaster response. Both New York and at the Pentagon, 9/11 represented a complex environment of terrorist actions, massive fires, and total collapse of structures never imagined to fail. Responders were forced to deal with the threat of continued attacks, large scale loss of life, and the complete collapse of the Twin Towers. Up until this event, no American responder or leadership network had ever been so challenged since the U.S. was attacked on December 7, 1941 at Pearl Harbor. The silo effect of distinct cultures, budgets, and narrowly focused mission requirements compel many government agencies toward self-protectiveness, insularity, and allegiance to their own agency-based advocacy and

¹ Ibid., 3.

independence. In the post-9/11 and post-Katrina environments, there needs to be new leadership paradigms that compel leaders to work in a collaborative, common manner to succeed at the strategic level. New leadership paradigms must include a common mission and intent and the embrace of core values such as unity of mission that coalesces all stakeholders.

These theories also do not fully capture what occurs when leaders must catalyze action well above and beyond their formal lines of decision making and control. Marcus et al. argue that the best evidence of effective leadership in these situations is unified action among all stakeholders toward a common goal, which they call “connectivity.”² To achieve this, they argue that leaders today must simultaneously lead “down” in the traditional sense, “up” to influence the people or organizations to which they are accountable, and “across” to activate peer groups and others with whom there is no formal subordinate relationship, and that these activities are parts of an integrated whole. They describe such broadly envisioned, overarching leadership as “meta-leadership.” Meta-leadership addresses leadership challenges that cross inter- as well as intra-organizational boundaries.³

The meta-leadership model was developed observing and analyzing the actions of leaders in unprecedented crisis situations—post-9/11, post-Anthrax scare, post-Katrina, and other crises—as well as the preparation for the next-generation of such emergencies. Marcus et al. have worked in educational settings with more than 225 senior U.S. government leaders and tracked the impact of this work over a five-year period. As the principles of meta-leadership were applied in a variety of situations, the observations are presented as qualitative rather than quantitative analysis. Marcus et al. developed a theory of leadership based on guiding principles of what makes for a good leader in a catastrophic or complex incident. However, Marcus et al. conducted no research that focused on one leader during one event. Rather, they put together a conglomeration of leadership traits using the “best of the best” traits among many leaders and many different

² Leonard J. Marcus, Barry C. Dorn, and Joseph M. Henderson, “Meta-Leadership and National Emergency Preparedness: A Model to Build Government Connectivity,” *Biosecurity and Bioterrorism: Biodefense Strategy, Practice, and Science* 4, no. 2 (2006): 129, doi:10.1089/bsp.2006.4.128.

³ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, “The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership,” 3.

events. This composite model does not define whether or not a single leader can in fact be a meta-leader who exhibits each of the five tenets of meta-leadership during a single, catastrophic event.

According to the special report of the Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs' report *Hurricane Katrina, A Nation Still Unprepared*, there four overarching government failures that led to prolonged suffering of the population impacted by the storm and the slow recovery:

1. Long-term warnings went unheeded and government officials neglected their duties to prepare for a forewarned catastrophe;
2. Government officials took insufficient actions or made poor decisions in the days immediately before and after landfall;
3. Systems on which officials relied on to support their response efforts failed; and
4. Government officials at all levels failed to provide effective leadership.⁴

This 700-page document focuses the majority of its poor leadership examples on Louisiana in general and on the New Orleans metropolitan area specifically or on the federal government's mistakes. Few references are made to the leadership in Mississippi, from the local levels to the state level. Because there is little mention of Mississippi leadership decisions in any government publications, this thesis examined the Governor Barbour's leadership and his key decisions in the days, weeks, months, and years after Hurricane Katrina. His leadership decisions were then examined through the lens of meta-leadership in order to determine if he fit the definition of a meta-leader.

Marcus et al.'s concept of meta-leadership pertains to leadership in a complex, catastrophic event. Hurricane Katrina was an extraordinary act of nature. It was the most destructive natural disaster in American history in terms of economic loss, laying waste to 90,000 square miles of land, an area the size of the United Kingdom.⁵ In Mississippi, the storm surge obliterated coastal communities. In addition, New Orleans was overwhelmed by flooding. All told, more than 1,500 people died. Clearly, Hurricane

⁴ *Hurricane Katrina: A Nation Still Unprepared: Report of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, United States Senate S. Doc. No. 109-322 (2006), 2.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

Katrina represented a complex catastrophe and serves as an excellent case study for meta-leadership.

B. RESEARCH QUESTION

To what extent is Governor Haley Barbour's response to and decision making during Hurricane Katrina an example of meta-leadership? What can we learn as far as smart practices from Barbour's leadership? If Governor Barbour's leadership style closely mirrors the theory of meta-leadership, can this model serve as a roadmap for other leaders in a crisis situation?

C. RESEARCH DESIGN

The focus of this thesis was the conduct of a single case study. Governor Haley Barbour's leadership style and decision-making process during Hurricane Katrina response operations were examined to determine whether or to what extent they accord with the theory of meta-leadership. Governor Barbour was interviewed to gain his personal insights into his response to the disaster and his thoughts during the response and recovery phases. The case study model follows a qualitative construct. The governor's actions and decisions were applied to the five tenets of meta-leadership: 1) the person 2) the situation 3) lead the silo 4) lead up 5) lead connectivity.⁶ The intent was to validate the theory of meta-leadership and provide an analysis of the response, recovery, and rebuilding through a case study. Using one case study does not necessarily validate or disprove a theory. There are an immeasurable number of factors of both the leader and the situation that influence the outcome of an event. However, an examination of one person's decisions during the course of one event can magnify critical factors that come into play in determining success or failure. Therefore, by providing a foundation to study the actions of one person in one event can serve as the foundation for future studies to validate the theory of meta-leadership. This is a novel approach in that most case studies develop theories through case studies. The theory of meta-leadership has already been developed. This thesis tests the work of Marcus et al.

⁶ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, "Meta-Leadership and National Emergency Preparedness," 129.

D. SELECTION CRITERIA RATIONALE

Current leadership models include thousands of examples of leadership and the styles, actions, and training that are attributed to the leader. However, an examination of those styles illustrates one overarching theme: leadership styles are for the most part hierarchal and do not cross the traditional boundaries between organizations. With the advent of outsourcing business functions, real-time supply chain management, whole-of-government constructs and real-time information flow, the traditional notions of hierarchal leadership require modifications to keep pace with changing technology and governance structures. In other words, today's environment requires a new, innovative leadership style that allows modern leaders to function in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environment. Furthermore, the majority of leadership styles available to be studied are more leadership traits than a methodology or model to utilize to ensure success during a catastrophic occurrence. Meta-leadership is a complete model and theory for leading in a complicated, uncertain, and ambiguous environment. This thesis will examine many of the challenges Governor Barbour encountered during Hurricane Katrina and how he overcame them. His actions and decisions will be examined through the lens of meta-leadership to illustrate how his leadership traits fit the tenets of meta-leadership as defined by Marcus et.al.⁷

I chose to examine Governor Barbour and his response during Katrina because of my personal experiences with him during Katrina. As I researched dozens of leadership models, meta-leadership seemed the most compelling model to apply to the governor's actions. I examined other disasters in recent history, from the events of September 11, 2001, to the anthrax crisis, to the Boston Marathon bombings. Hurricane Katrina was clearly the most catastrophic and the one I had the most knowledge of. I looked at various leaders, from Rudolph Giuliani to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Administrator Craig Fugate, to Fire Department of New York (FDNY) Battalion Chief Joseph Pfeifer. While leaders in their own rights, Governor Barbour provided the most comprehensive example of leadership during a large-scale catastrophe. Last, because of

⁷ Ibid.

my previous encounters with Governor Barbour, I was granted access to him for the purpose of studying his decisions during Katrina.

E. LITERATURE REVIEW

I conducted a methodical review of literature surrounding the decision-making and leadership models for modern, complex catastrophes. My review focused on determining if there is a practical model for leadership that transcends the normal boundaries of single organizations and hierarchal “leader-to-lead” dynamics. Through the research, I discovered the theory of meta-leadership. This relatively new and innovative theory differs from many models on leadership in that this model promotes cross-organizational collaboration and thinking outside the hierarchal boundaries of a single organization. With this model in mind, I conducted research to see if the leadership of Governor Barbour during Hurricane Katrina could be applied to the meta-leadership theory. I examined historical accounts of the storm to determine if there were sound decisions made that expedited Mississippi’s response to and recovery from the most economically devastating hurricane to strike the United States. Finally, I conducted research on the life and career of Governor Haley R. Barbour to determine if he fit the definition of a meta-leader.

F. LEADERSHIP

The leadership style required to accelerate the move from a complex, chaotic environment to one that is manageable is referred to as meta-leadership.⁸ Meta-leaders require a distinct mindset, unique leadership acumen, and the ability to create a network that transcends agencies.⁹ Meta-leadership refers to guidance, direction, and momentum across organizational lines that develop into a shared course of action and a commonality of purpose among numerous agencies. There are five dimensions of meta-leadership practice and analysis that serve as an organizing framework for classifying the foci of leadership study. These dimensions are: 1) the person of the leader and his awareness or

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ronald N. Ashkenas, *The Boundaryless Organization: Breaking the Chains of Organizational Structure* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1995), 14.

problem assessment; 2) the situation, problem, change, or crisis that compels response; 3) leading one's entity and/or operating in one's designated purview of authority; 4) leading up to bosses or those to whom one is accountable; and 5) leading cross-system connectivity.¹⁰ Meta-leadership is especially valuable in events when many different organizations and entities must be brought together for common purposes.

Often, the complexities of leadership are obscured by the inclination to view leadership as a top-down process of leader leading follower. The boss-to-employee relationship is formalized in clear roles, rules, job descriptions, and responsibilities with prescribed performance and productivity expectations.¹¹ However, this leadership technique does not capture what occurs when leaders in bureaucratic organizations seek to influence and activate change well above and beyond established lines of their decision-making authority and control. They are driven by a purpose broader than that prescribed by their formal roles, and they are motivated and capable of acting in ways that transcend usual organizational confines.

The meta-leader model was developed to account for the special skills needed by leaders in an emergency preparedness and response environment. Marcus et al. do discuss the issue of connectivity and how leadership activities across organizations must always be effective;¹² however, there is no research that backs this up. In addition, they do not address the evolving impact of social networks and how they affect relationships, which are important issues.

The meta-leader model does not weigh any tenet more than others. The person of the meta-leader must be the linchpin of the model. An ineffective leader or one that does not fit the model thereby negates the rest of the tenets. Experience, maturity, and emotional intelligence are a must in the meta-leadership model.

The meta-leadership activities referenced in all readings address short-term fixes rather than long-term system changes. Relationships change depending on the activities

¹⁰ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, "The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership," 12.

¹¹ John W. Gardner, *On Leadership* (New York: Free Press, 1990), 102.

¹² Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, "Meta-Leadership and National Emergency Preparedness," 130.

upon which that the relationship is built. Leaders for transformational change may not be the same participants in a short-term emergency situation. In addition, the long-term utility of the meta-leadership model is its adaptability to other than emergency situations, such as catastrophic events that take months or years to fully recover from. A long-term, transformation relationship may require different leadership techniques than those of a short duration.

Collaboration must be real in order to affect change. Additionally, it must be based on the realization that leaders do not leave their agendas behind when they collaborate and negotiate. Leaders use each other's agenda to come up with realistic solutions to problems and policies that reflect all parties' agendas and values. Collaboration allows us to turn ideas into actions. Furthermore, importance of leaders being linchpins within their organizations cannot be overemphasized. Meta-leaders also need to be linchpins in that they need to move their partners to new levels and non-traditional approaches to the transformation of programs and policies.¹³

Finally, the situation tenet of meta-leadership is well-defined, but there is no study on how imperative it is that the meta-leader fully comprehends the situation in such a way as to immediately devise a solution. Even an experienced leader can misinterpret the situation, which can lead to an object failure to execute a response plan.

According to Welsh scholar David Snowden, there are four phases of a response to a large-scale event: chaos, complex, complicated, and simple. Dr. Snowden defines these phases as the Cynefin framework.¹⁴ This term describes a perspective on the evolutionary nature of complex systems, including their inherent uncertainty. Cynefin is a Welsh word that means "habitat or place." The name serves as a reminder that all interactions are strongly influenced and frequently determined by our experiences, both through the direct influence of personal experience, as well as through collective experience.¹⁵

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ David J. Snowden, and Mary E. Boone, "A Leader's Framework for Decision Making," *Harvard Business Review* 85 (November 2007): 67.

¹⁵ Ibid., 68.

Snowden's best description of chaos is "where complex systems go in order to solve a complex task."¹⁶ By this, he means that the only way to resolve chaos is to work through the initial problems of an event by using adaptive and innovative leadership skills acquired through experience and from innate intelligence. In essence, he is saying that true leaders in emergency response obtain their skills through both nature and nurture. One of the most critical requirements is the need for responders to work to make sense out of a situation in those first few critical moments.¹⁷ Weick's book, *Making Sense of the Organization*, details the definition of sensemaking and how he developed applicable models for business problems, strategic planning concepts, and for the world of first responders making life and death decisions. He provided superlative examples of how responders, when faced with life-threatening decisions, either succeeded or failed based on their ability to make sense of a situation and apply the proper techniques and guidance in a very short span. In addition, Weick theorizes that sensemaking is essentially making sense out of a situation that initially makes no sense and a situation that known methods will not provide applicable resolutions because the situation is new and untested. It is important to explore how the meta-leadership model dovetails into the Weick's and Simon's¹⁸ theories of sensemaking. Personal leadership development activities also impact effectiveness of the meta-leadership partnerships.

Leaders are both made and born.¹⁹ People must have key traits to lead before they can be a leader. They must take charge of themselves and commit to learning both the art and science of leading.²⁰ Giuliani and Kurson talk about these individual traits but never acknowledge the bigger picture of the organization over the individual.²¹ Conversely, Burns shifted the focus of leadership studies from the traits and actions of great men to the interaction of leaders and their constituencies as collaborators working toward mutual

¹⁶ Ibid., 67.

¹⁷ Karl E. Weick, *Making Sense of the Organization* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 122.

¹⁸ Herbert A. Simon, "Invariants of Human Behavior," *Annual Review of Psychology* 41, no. 1 (1990): 4, doi:10.1146/annurev.ps.41.020190.000245.

¹⁹ Rudolph W. Giuliani, and Ken Kurson, *Leadership* (New York: Hyperion, 2002), 17.

²⁰ Ibid., 23.

²¹ Ibid., 27

benefit.²² This creates a true paradox of leadership models. Can they be mutually exclusive?

One key aspect of being a leader is the ability to sense quickly of a grave situation. Successful leaders are capable of making rational, effective decisions quickly without complete information. Simon refers to this as “satisficing” or making the required, rational decision that maximizes the opportunity to respond in such a manner as to move the situation from chaos to complex.²³

Ashkenas’s work on creating an organization that has minimal hierarchies and has middle management working across the spectrum of the organization presents a twist to new leadership models. Ashkenas devotes a great portion of his works to advocating for reduced boundaries in corporations, restructuring to meet the needs of the current global marketplace. Because of the radical changes in supply chain management in which multiple organizations are responsible for a product’s delivery to the customers, Ashkenas states that companies should mimic the supply chain model in that no one particular directorate or section should be responsible for a product.²⁴ Essentially, the premise is to break down the “stovepipes” when a company is restructuring.²⁵ Written for the people who will actually be in charge of the change, this is a handbook on how, not why, to create a corporate structure that mimics the borderless global marketplace. The strategy outlined is difficult to follow and to understand how a company in the midst of downsizing could ever implement the changes advocated in the book. New corporations could feasibly organize in the manner described by Ashkenas.

Boin’s work on leaders’ responsibilities during a disaster fits well with meta-leadership. Boin states that in times of crisis, communities and members of organizations expect their leaders to minimize the impact of the crisis at hand.²⁶ Boin goes on to

²² James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), 17.

²³ Simon, “Invariants of Human Behavior,” 4.

²⁴ Ashkenas, *The Boundaryless Organization*, 17.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

²⁶ Arjen Boin, *The Politics of Crisis Management: Public Leadership under Pressure* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 6.

describe how critics, the media, and bureaucratic competitors try to seize the moment to blame incumbent rulers and their policies for all missteps taken in a catastrophic event.²⁷ In an extreme environment, policy makers must somehow establish a sense of normality and foster collective learning from the crisis experience. This comprehensive analysis examines how leaders deal with the strategic challenges and political risks they face. Boin's work explains what is expected of leaders but he never ties in the "how" with the "what." This was the first piece of literature I read on leadership during a crisis, and it is what motivated me to write a thesis on leadership and what led me to meta-leadership as a model for elected officials to utilize during high-stress events.

According to Nicholls, Burns used the term "transforming leadership" to describe a type of non-coercive political leadership that engaged people, was morally elevating and, in turn, sparked leadership in them.²⁸ When applying this concept to organizations, however, Nicholls noted that there was a tendency by upper level managers to broaden the meaning of transforming in such a way that it obscured its original intent.²⁹ Burns viewed transforming leadership from the non-coercive influence on the individuals' perspective: people were transformed by becoming "engaged" and this, in turn, could produce a transformation in the organization.³⁰ As it happens, however, a transformation can also be produced by leadership from the opposite perspective, namely what Nicholls referred to as a power-wielding "shaker-and-mover."³¹ A successful autocrat can transform the fortunes of an organization but is far from Burns's concept of a transforming leader. In this article, Burns suggests this confusion can be clarified by realizing that the transformation produced by the shaker-and-mover comes from success in performing the macro-leadership role of culture-building. True transformational leadership in organizations only occurs when the "visioning" of meta-leadership is

²⁷ Ibid., 16.

²⁸ John Nicholls, "Meta Leadership in Organisations: Applying Burns's Political Concept in Transforming Leadership," *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 9, no. 2 (1988): 17, doi:10.1108/eb053633. 17–22

²⁹ Ibid., 18.

³⁰ Ibid., 20

³¹ Boin, *The Politics of Crisis Management*, 18.

applied to performance of the leadership role. In this way, enthusiastic followers are created as people become “engaged,” doubts are removed and energy is released. Nicholls looked at the concept of leadership from the perspective of consensus building and not through authoritative power that comes with a position. Additionally, Nicholls highlighted the differences between the shaker and mover and a visionary leader. However, he seemed intent on stating that these leadership styles were “either/or” and that these traits could not be resident in one single leader.³²

Schein offered a definition of what he called organizational culture as a pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.³³ The definition applies to organizations of virtually every kind: families, social clubs, work groups, companies, governments, and nations.³⁴ Over time, each such group develops a set of tacit and explicit understandings, beliefs, and practices.

Furthermore, Schein states that values guide decision making and activity at all levels in the organization.³⁵ The focus and management style of senior officers is values-based. Much can be learned about the culture of an organization by looking at such things as its routine processes, how are decisions made, how much responsibility is given to each staff member in the organization, and how flexible the organization is in dealing with tasks that are out of the ordinary. When these things are put together, a distinctive organizational “personality” becomes apparent even to casual observers.³⁶

Schein’s philosophy ties in well with meta-leadership, especially in the person of the meta-leader tenet. Organizational culture has a powerful effect on the way an

³² Ibid., 22.

³³ Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1985), 19.

³⁴ Ibid., 22.

³⁵ Ibid., 65.

³⁶ Ibid., 67.

organization operates and on the way the employees think about themselves, their superiors, and the mission of the organization. In addition, Schein made some mentions of sub-cultures within organizations but did not elaborate.³⁷ Within every organization are sub-cultures, some good and some not. Schein should have elaborated more on how these sub-cultures can be counterproductive and how productive leaders could mitigate contrarian sub-cultures.

G. HURRICANE KATRINA

At 5 pm on Friday, August 26, 2005, the National Weather Service in Slidell, Louisiana (LA), predicted that Hurricane Katrina would make landfall in Burras, LA, as a Category 4 hurricane sometime Monday morning, August 29, 2005.³⁸ These predictions proved true, and the storm made its first landfall at 6:10 am with sustained winds at 121 mph, a Category 3. The storm was unusually large at 400 miles across with an eye measuring 30 miles.³⁹ For a historical perspective, Hurricane Camille, which struck Mississippi in 1969, had an eye of only 10 miles.⁴⁰ Two hours later, the storm made its second landfall in Hancock County, Mississippi (MS). Katrina was the third-strongest storm in history to make landfall in the United States. It killed 1836 people, including 238 in Mississippi. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicted a storm surge of 18 to 22 feet. An unmanned buoy 64 nautical miles off of Dauphin Island, Alabama (AL), measured a wave 57.4 feet, marking it as the largest wave ever recorded from a tropical cyclone.⁴¹

Hurricane Katrina left in its wake a path of destruction that covered almost 90,000 square miles.⁴² The storm remained a Category 1 as it passed through Jackson, MS, 169

³⁷ Ibid., 68.

³⁸ *A Failure of Initiative: Final Report of the Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina* (Report 000-000) (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006), 561.

³⁹ *Hurricane Katrina: A Nation Still Unprepared*, 51.

⁴⁰ James Patterson Smith, *Hurricane Katrina: The Mississippi Story* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2012), 21.

⁴¹ Ibid., 22.

⁴² *Hurricane Katrina: A Nation Still Unprepared*, 51.

miles from the coast. The economic impact of the storm was over \$200 billion, marking it as the costliest storm in the nation's history.⁴³ In scientific terms, Hurricane Katrina's total energy, according to Ivor van Heerden, Louisiana State University's Hurricane Center Director, was more than 100,000 times more powerful than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima.⁴⁴ Smith's book, *Hurricane Katrina: The Mississippi Story*, is an excellent account of the impact of Hurricane Katrina on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Smith provides oral histories and other primary sources and tells the dramatic story of a people who confronted unprecedented devastation.

In addition, Smith discusses the life and death accounts from August 29, 2005, and the issues of a lack of food and water that followed. Told from a grassroots perspective, the narrative offers insights into the politics of recovery funding and the bureaucratic missteps that hampered the storm response and complicated and delayed the work of recovery. Smith did an excellent job of describing the damage, the horrible conditions after the storm and the excellent response by the coastal residents in their rebuilding efforts. However, he did not examine any of the strategic-level decisions and merely blamed the politicians and federal responders for everything that residents perceived to be wrong.⁴⁵

On September 15, 2005, the House of Representatives approved H.R. 437, which created the Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina. By February 15, 2006, it was to report its findings regarding the development, coordination, and execution by local, state, and federal authorities of emergency response plans and other activities in preparation for Hurricane Katrina. Next, the committee was tasked to report its findings on the local, state, and federal government response to Hurricane Katrina. Chaired by Representative Tom Davis (R-VA), the committee issued *A Failure of Initiative* as its final report.⁴⁶

⁴³ *A Failure of Initiative: Final Report*.

⁴⁴ Smith, *Hurricane Katrina: The Mississippi Story*, 56.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁴⁶ *A Failure of Initiative: Final Report*, iii.

The results of the House Select Committee hearings and research confirmed the news accounts about the failure of all three levels of government to meet their obligations to the public.⁴⁷ In its report, the committee characterized the response to Katrina as “a litany of mistakes, misjudgments, lapses, and absurdities all cascading together, blinding us to what was coming and hobbling any collective effort to respond.”⁴⁸ The committee stressed that the Katrina failures were primarily the result of a lack of performance, not a lack of plans.⁴⁹ The response described in the report was not a failure of public policy but a failure of policy implementation. As often happens in governmental investigations, the entire focus seemed to be more about finding someone to blame rather than an in-depth examination of why things went wrong. As has been repeatedly stated, Katrina was an unprecedented storm. There was no failure of initiative; the failure was in imagination. Leaders and emergency managers across the spectrum from local to federal failed to imagine that a storm could create that much devastation over such a wide expanse. Even if the leaders had imagined such a storm, would the government (local, state and federal) ever have allocated the kind of funding to mitigate the effects of such a storm?

H. GOVERNOR BARBOUR

The literature available on Governor Barbour was a mix of public relations releases, interviews with the governor, and editorials that either vilified him or presented him as the twenty-first century Ronald Reagan. Outside of the strictest of biographical sketches, I struggled to find a good biography of Governor Barbour. The majority of my findings were from the Mississippi Department of Archives in the form of newspaper articles.

I. REVIEW OF UPCOMING CHAPTERS

The following chapters will provide a roadmap that ties in meta-leadership with Governor Barbour’s actions during Hurricane Katrina. Chapter II outlines the five tenets

⁴⁷ Ibid., 66.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 5.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 33.

of meta-leadership as defined by Marcus et al.⁵⁰ Chapter III details of Hurricane Katrina's impact on the state of Mississippi will be described. Chapter IV describes Governor Barbour's actions, decisions, and thoughts in the aftermath of the storm. Chapter V provides an analysis of the governor's actions as they pertain to meta-leadership in order to determine whether or not Governor Barbour's actions fit the mold of meta-leadership. Finally, Chapter VI ties the thesis together and analyses the validity of meta-leadership as a leadership model for large-scale catastrophic events.

⁵⁰ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, "Meta-Leadership and National Emergency Preparedness," 128.

II. META-LEADERSHIP

Successful leaders are capable of projecting their scope of thinking, influence, and accomplishment far beyond formal or expected bounds of authority. In the same vein as “meta-research” seeks systematic themes across many lines of study, “meta-leaders” generate widespread and cohesive action and impact that expands their domain of influence and leverage.⁵¹ There are five dimensions of meta-leadership practice and analysis that serve as an organizing framework for classifying the foci of leadership study. These dimensions are: 1) the person of the leader and his awareness or problem assessment; 2) the problem, change, or crisis that compels response; 3) leading one’s entity and/or operating in one’s designated purview of authority; 4) leading up to bosses or those to whom one is accountable; and 5) leading cross-system connectivity.⁵² Meta-leadership is especially valuable in events when many different organizations and entities must be brought together for common purposes (see Figure 1).

⁵¹ Ibid., 1.

⁵² Ibid., 2.

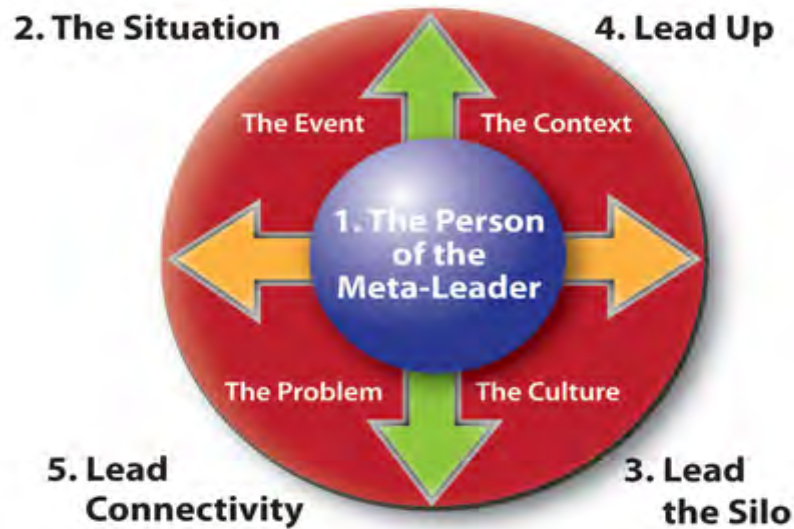


Figure 1. Meta-Leadership Model⁵³

Often, the complexities of leadership are obscured by the inclination to view leadership as a top-down process of leader leading follower. The boss-to-employee relationship is formalized in clear roles, rules, job descriptions, and responsibilities with prescribed performance and productivity expectations.⁵⁴ However, this leadership technique does not capture what occurs when leaders in bureaucratic organizations seek to influence and activate change well above and beyond established lines of their decision-making authority and control. They are driven by a purpose broader than that prescribed by their formal roles, and are motivated and capable of acting in ways that transcend usual organizational confines. This is described by Marcus et al. as meta-leadership.⁵⁵

Meta-leaders seek to achieve results that cannot be accomplished by one organization, unit, or department alone. Their objective is often a “social good.” They strive for improved community preparedness and national security, better health care and patient safety, or higher corporate productivity.⁵⁶ These broad objectives appeal to and

⁵³ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, “The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership,” 4.

⁵⁴ Gardner, *On Leadership*, 102.

⁵⁵ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, “The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership,” 12.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 13.

require participation by people who work in the full spectrum of occupations, from public, private to community-based levels of a structured hierarchical framework. By linking the efforts of these many people and many otherwise disconnected organizational units, the meta-leaders leverage and integrate their activities to accomplish something that would not otherwise be achievable.⁵⁷ There is value in both the outcome and in the process, in other words, the “impact value” and the “collaborative value.”

Meta-leaders inspire others with their capacity to articulate and achieve linkages and outcomes. They strive for more than just personal gain or parochial organizational promotion. Additionally, meta-leaders make the case that by acting and interacting above, beyond, and across the confines of their own bureaucratic entities, the overall enterprise will accomplish more, and therefore the work for people involved will be more fulfilling and satisfying. Meta-leaders coalesce the knowledge, organizational workings, and frame of reference to achieve an otherwise unachievable cohesion of effort.⁵⁸ When effectively practiced, the vision and aptitude portrayed by the meta-leader compel others to follow.

By design, meta-leadership concept and practice themes address the complexities of generating a unity of action when many different people, organizational units and even competing priorities are focused into a broadly adopted strategy, plan, or mission.⁵⁹ In concept, it is a question of best linking solution to problem: what personal and contextual factors affect what meta-leaders see, perceive, decide and ultimately act upon? In practice, it is a puzzle of optimally engaging three facets—up, down, and across—of organizational connectivity. Who are the many people that must be influenced, and how can they best be leveraged to prompt forward motion? The meta-leadership model described here focuses attention and helps categorize the scope of people, factors, and considerations that are in the purview of this integrated enterprise.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 67.

⁵⁸ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, “The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership,” 18.

⁵⁹ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, “Meta-Leadership and National Emergency Preparedness,” 131.

⁶⁰ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, “The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership,” 5.

A. THE PERSON OF THE META-LEADER

Personality, experience, culture, emotional expression, and character are significant factors in the conduct and impact of meta-leaders.⁶¹ These qualities vary significantly from leader to leader. However, there are common traits in meta-leaders that define them as leaders. Meta-leaders tend to be “big thinkers.” They are willing to take a large and complex problem and search a wide expanse for solutions.⁶² In addition, they have abundant curiosity and prolific imagination to contemplate and activate that which has not been otherwise discovered. Moreover, they are imaginative strategists, charting a course that allows stakeholders to operationally link and leverage one another in order to accomplish shared objectives. And most importantly, they have a penchant and capacity for making meaningful things happen.⁶³

Additionally, meta-leaders also possess emotional intelligence.⁶⁴ People who direct large scale or complex initiatives must convey these attributes: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Because they are watched and challenged by audiences beyond their usual social circles, meta-leaders must be comfortable in their own surroundings, in the milieu of others. Furthermore, they must have the talent to make other people feel comfortable and assured. The self-discipline, drive, understanding, and capacity to form meaningful and satisfying relationships are critical in the effort to cross the usual divides and boundaries of organizational, professional, and cultural association.⁶⁵

It takes great stamina during high stress circumstances to effectively lead organizations. Meta-leaders constantly rely on the practiced procedures, protocols, or patterns of past experiences that trigger constructive activity and actions. The meta-leaders, by virtue of emotional intelligence and experience, have the perspective to chart

⁶¹ Alan Kirschenbaum, *Chaos Organization and Disaster Management* (New York: Marcel Dekker, 2004), 27.

⁶² Giuliani, and Kurson, *Leadership*, 34.

⁶³ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, “The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership,” 7.

⁶⁴ Burns, *Leadership*, 17.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 34.

the possibilities and prompt action across their organization. Through disciplined self-awareness, they are able to manage the magnitude of their stress, and with that, rapidly recover the composure required to guide others systematically up from the “basement.”⁶⁶ Having accomplished that and with constructive action in place, the meta-leaders are then able to raise themselves to the highest order of thinking, to the cortex or “new brain,” to formulate strategic links and leverages that guide and direct people beyond the crisis.⁶⁷ Meta-leaders have the experience and maturity to identify gaps between the problem and the response to it and then to inspire the connectivity of action and confidence of purpose under even the most trying of circumstances. This aptitude for the strategic direction and capacity to influence beyond his immediate domain epitomizes the unique contributions of meta-leaders.

B. THE SITUATION

Finding the most appropriate solution to a problem or response to a crisis depends first on precisely determining what is occurring.⁶⁸ This is a difficult task because there is often a gap between objective reality and subjective assessment. This is more likely to occur when many different people and organizational units are involved, when a great deal of information is required to diagnose the problem, when the stakes and emotions are high, and when the analysis and action are time constrained. In other words, the greater the complexity, the more difficult it is to develop a factual, evidence-based, clear, and actionable description of what is occurring.⁶⁹ Truly understanding the entire situation is the most important aspect of meta-leadership. Without an accurate sense of the size, scope, and complexity of the situation, leaders cannot make effective decisions.

⁶⁶ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, “The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership,” 7.

⁶⁷ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, “Meta-Leadership and National Emergency Preparedness,” 129.

⁶⁸ John Bransford, and Barry S. Stein, *The Ideal Problem Solver: A Guide for Improving Thinking, Learning, and Creativity* (New York, NY: W.H. Freeman, 1984), 32.

⁶⁹ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, “The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership,” 129.

To understand the complexities of the situation is to grasp the disparities between what one believes to be true and the actual truth.⁷⁰ This is a particularly compelling problem in the midst of an unfolding crisis. In a volatile and quickly changing scenario, the gap is inevitable, since it takes time for information to emerge and assessments to evolve. In practice, this requires the meta-leaders to grasp, to work with, and to narrow that likely reality-belief gap, aided by the collection of further information, the passage of time and the perspective of hindsight. Such complex circumstances demand the capacities and skills for strategic situational awareness.⁷¹

Situational awareness and the ability to identify and thus close gaps in information are key traits of meta-leaders. In a complex situation, the many stakeholders involved naturally each have their own analysis and interpretation of the “objective problem” in accordance with their distinct interests, concerns, and purposes.⁷² In looking for ways by which those differences could complement rather than contradict one another, meta-leaders link, leverage, and integrate different perspectives into a value-added prospect, in effect closing the gaps and building connectivity among those disparate views.⁷³ With that, the differences are less likely to serve as detractors. Potential discord is transformed into an opportunity for acquiring broad perspective. At times, this analysis requires identification of confusing cross-cutting themes, priorities, and considerations in order to derive the most accurate “picture” of the problem or event that is unfolding. Meta-leaders recognize that the size of the gap will shift as time and events unfold.⁷⁴ In practice, during a high casualty disaster, the anticipation of additional and more accurate information and the expectation that the situation will remain fluid for some time does not relieve the meta-leader of responsibility. Rather, it puts even more pressure to take action before all the facts are in place and the crisis has subsided. Meta-leaders must make sense of the situation without having complete information.

⁷⁰ Joan Marques, “Awakened Leadership in Action: A Comparison of Three Exceptional Business Leaders,” *Journal of Management Development* 27, no. 8 (2008): 813, doi:10.1108/02621710810895640.

⁷¹ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, “Meta-Leadership and National Emergency Preparedness,” 129.

⁷² Nicholls, “Meta Leadership in Organisations,” 18.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁷⁴ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, “The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership,” 17.

Sensemaking is paramount to effective action in the midst of a crisis. Meta-leaders cannot suffer from “paralysis by analysis.” A quick assessment that is mostly accurate is better than a slow, thorough one that comes too late to make a difference.⁷⁵

Effective meta-leadership closes the gap between what is objectively happening and what is perceived to be in progress. Meta-leaders possess accurate situational awareness and problem assessment under stressful circumstances. Often, in the vacuum of information, there are myths and false information that can lead to a great deviation from the plan. Rumors, inaccurate reporting, and exaggeration can mislead a leader and cause him to devote time and valuable resources going in the wrong direction. Meta-leaders must distinguish between what is important from what is less so. They must identify what are cohesive priorities from those that are not. Finally, they must gather the confidence and courage to make decisions and take action based on calculated speculation and risk. Meta-leaders understand those risks, recognizing that any decision or action could impose differential perils and downsides for each of the different stakeholders. Meta-leaders also calculate the upsides of those decisions and actions, again understanding that “success” will be measured differently by each stakeholder who is affected.⁷⁶

Often, in the absence of meta-leadership, pragmatic situational awareness and problem assessment suffer when the leader is distracted or simply misconstrues what is occurring. This gap between perception and reality has its own dangers.⁷⁷ There are numerous reasons why this happens and why it happens often. It could be a function of a parochial point of view or the leaders are caught by a strong case of denial prompted by a multitude of personal or professional explanations. They are seeing the expected or the desired outcomes and missing the information or clues that do not correspond. This could be from a lack of experience necessary to identify and understand what is happening. Some leaders demand to have all the information before making a decision, and in the process, cause a delay that further exacerbates the original problem. At times, leaders are

⁷⁵ Weick, *Making Sense of the Organization*, 53.

⁷⁶ Nicholls, “Meta Leadership in Organisations,” 19

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 20.

overloaded by information, much of it low quality and distracting, which becomes difficult if not impossible to use and decipher as important facts become lost in a mass of data. Functionally, these conditions lead to ineffective problem solving by leaders. Further, they are incapable of gaining and maintaining situational awareness. Ineffective leaders often focus on solving the easy or convenient problems rather than the problems that truly need solving.

C. LEAD THE SILO

In complex environments involving multiple organizations, departments, and units operating in overlapping domains, leaders who arise as meta-leaders rarely operate independently. They have their own organizational base of operations within which followers see them in charge.⁷⁸ In this instance, the leaders carry authority; have resources at their disposal and functions within a set of rules and roles that define expectations and requirements. Those subordinates expect adherence to allegiances and loyalties, trusting that the leaders will advocate on behalf of their best interests.

For meta-leaders, the support of their constituents is essential to achieving influence within the larger system. It is imperative that, in order to get people outside of the organization to follow meta-leaders, that their own people recognize them as the leader who is looking out for them and their organization's best interests. A potential quandary is in treading that fine line between advocating on behalf of the larger system mission and meeting expectations of his subordinates. There are a number of elements required to make this happen. Meta-leaders must articulate and personify the shared mission in a way that respects the identity of each individual constituency while not negating that of their own. And there must be demonstrated commitment to constituents if they are to get that same commitment in return.⁷⁹ Leaders must operate on the premise that their success is directly tied to the success of their subordinates. If a commitment or objective is to be generated and championed in many directions and for shared purposes, it must first emanate from the meta-leaders' internal, immediate core group. Meta-leaders

⁷⁸ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, "The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership," 12.

⁷⁹ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, "Meta-Leadership and National Emergency Preparedness," 133.

are expressively committed to their followers and thus generate that same commitment in response.⁸⁰

The meta-leader is a “leader of leaders” and fosters leadership development throughout the system, though first among their own constituents. Leadership does not reside with one person. In robust organizations, it is embedded among many people and at multiple levels of the hierarchy.⁸¹ Moreover, effective leadership is a continuous learning process. Meta-leaders must constantly encourage subordinates to learn, grow, and have vision. These goals must continuously be modified as the situation dictates. Meta-leaders must foster proactive thinking, and they must inspire their subordinates to become overachievers. To do this requires a sense of leadership confidence and security. Furthermore, meta-leaders must acknowledge that strong, smart, capable followers are not threats to their careers but rather vital assets committed to common goals and objectives. Meta-leaders seek high achieving people who are essentially meta-leaders in training. In other words, meta-leaders seek empowered people who share the passion, commitment, instinct, and capacity to get things done.⁸²

Guiding and directing behavior from atop the hierarchy, the meta-leaders recognize that a collaborative, attuned strategy among senior leadership sets the tone for the organization to succeed. Even in the most successful organizations, there will be problems, differences, and conflicts. The issue is whether those differences are readily resolved or conversely played out as policy and procedural contests that put lower ranking personnel at cross-purposes. Meta-leaders understand the way relations at the highest levels affect operations at the lowest level. They use this understanding in a positive and proactive manner to enhance morale and shared purpose throughout the organization.⁸³

The unity of effort and reliability of achievement that meta-leaders inspire throughout their domain of responsibility is the foundation for work beyond the direct

⁸⁰ Nicholls, “Meta Leadership in Organisations,” 21.

⁸¹ Giuliani, and Kurson, *Leadership*, 56.

⁸² Nicholls, “Meta Leadership in Organisations,” 22.

⁸³ Giuliani, and Kurson, *Leadership*, 56.

confines of official authority and power. The confidence, direction, and dependability fostered within serve as the exemplification for what is communicated to the larger system of influence and action, especially in a large crisis situation.

D. LEAD UP

Most people who work in organizations have a boss. The chief executive officer (CEO) of a publicly traded corporation has the board of directors. Below the CEO are a series of subordinates who serve as boss to their staffs. Government agencies have strict supervisory oversight. And even the president, a governor, or mayor must be accountable to their electorates. As a result, our culture has in both its public and private domains a complex system of checks, balances, and oversights to limit autonomy and autocracy.⁸⁴

Being able to effectively influence the boss is an important element of wider leadership within the system. In government, as well as in corporate settings, subject matter experts often report to elected or appointed authorities who are responsible for policy direction and strategic decision making. While subordinates may not know more than their boss, they often have a perspective on the work at hand that their boss does not. Because they are in closer proximity to that work, subordinates have a better sense for both real problems on the ground as well as solutions to address them. This perspective and functional interdependence could be a valuable asset to the boss, though much depends on how the information is delivered and how it is received.⁸⁵

The great meta-leaders are a great subordinate. They are dependable, honest, reliable, and loyal. They validate the power and command equation, respecting, and serving the objectives of those in charge. In this way, the meta-leaders craft vertical connectivity and fosters two-way feedback. Influence is shaped by informing and educating the boss. Bosses of course vary in style and temperament, and the meta-leaders appreciate that as with any relationship, this relationship is one that must be carefully and strategically managed.⁸⁶ When this works well, the boss appreciates the prioritization and

⁸⁴ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, "The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership," 17.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 18.

⁸⁶ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, "Meta-Leadership and National Emergency Preparedness," 133.

management of problems and decisions. The focus is on the truly important issues or goals that are worthy of the boss's time. This drastically reduces distractions and inefficiencies. In shaping that focus, meta-leaders intentionally and transparently communicate information and a variety of reasonable options in order to craft strategic assessment and solution building. The successful subordinates manage assumptions, do not promise what cannot be delivered, and assure that the boss is never surprised. While bad news and valid criticism are hard to deliver, the meta-leaders practice "truth to power." They anticipate and manage the dangers and distractions of unforeseen problems. Successful meta-leaders give the boss possible solutions when delivering problems. They do not leave the boss wondering how to solve unforeseen issues.

It would be difficult if not impossible to be a meta-leader without the concurrence and support of the boss. Since one function of the boss is to reign in and curb abuses of power, a boss with an overly active subordinate meta-leader may not only stop these activities but also find them threatening to the point of dismissal. An unsympathetic boss could limit the would-be meta-leader's access to outside people. Worthwhile ideas and proposals could be marginalized. Obstacles and barriers could be imposed that would undermine the cause and purposes of the meta-leader. Good meta-leaders recognize these pitfalls and generally does not remain in organizations led by poor or unethical leaders.⁸⁷

In a successful organization, the meta-leaders are able to fashion wide influence throughout the system by virtue of the support and opportunities the boss is able to open. This does present a quandary of who gets the credit and subsequent reward. There are some bosses who welcome and encourage subordinates with valuable ideas and strategies and who endorse meta-leaders' larger presence in the system of influence and impact. That independence and those accomplishments are viewed by such a boss as a testament both to subordinates' talents and motivations as well as his or her own. Other bosses prefer to claim sole credit for those ideas and strategies in order to enhance their recognition and status on the larger scene. As appropriate to the situation, meta-leaders may very well conclude it best to allow the boss to take the recognition if it advances the

⁸⁷ Burns, *Leadership*, 17.

larger purposes.⁸⁸ Meta-leaders recognize that they can guide the direction of an organization or system through numerous vantage points.

E. LEAD CONNECTIVITY

In building a wide sphere of influence, meta-leaders grasp that just as vertical linkages are important, so too are horizontal linkages. By leveraging the capacity of many adjacent centers of expertise and capacity, meta-leaders are able to engage the spectrum of agencies and private interests that are to be recruited to a shared enterprise.⁸⁹ This is the value-added of meta-leaders. The ability to generate a common, multi-dimensional thread of interests and involvement among entities that look at a problem from very different yet complementary vantage points is a defining trait of meta-leaders. By combining assets and efforts, meta-leaders envision and activate more than what any one entity could do on its own.

The ability to lead connectivity is important and very difficult. Often, wide social problems and questions demand the engagement of a wide set of constituencies. These different groups and entities will not, on their own, recognize the lines of influence and capacity that they could generate together. In fact, they might very well see themselves in competition with one another. If credit or benefit falls to one entity more than another, the noble purposes can be undermined by those who question “what’s in it for me?” Meta-leaders are able to focus attention on the shared purposes while at the same time tempering those forces of suspicion and jealousy that constrain their achievement.⁹⁰

Meta-leaders keenly identify and understand the individual motives of different stakeholders and constituencies in generating a connectivity of thinking and action. The job is to align these disparate but complementary spheres into a unified plan of action. Each entity must be recognized for its unique profile of interests, experiences, and contributions to the shared enterprise.⁹¹ While it is common for people to focus on the

⁸⁸ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, “The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership,” 20.

⁸⁹ Ashkenas, *The Boundaryless Organization*, 65.

⁹⁰ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, “Meta-Leadership and National Emergency Preparedness,” 133.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 133.

differences and conflicts among them, the meta-leader turns the attention to points of agreement. Meta-leaders enable the various entities to focus on shared values, aspirations, objectives, and circumstances. With a new appreciation for their points of commonality, stakeholders are able to creatively envision what they could accomplish if they were to join forces, building new equations, and strategies of common ground and achievement.

Push-back and resistance are to be expected in fashioning this new alignment of strategy and action.⁹² Bureaucratic entities characteristically reward internally focused leadership that simply builds the budget, authority, and autonomy of their own endeavors. The introduction of collaboration may require some traditionally competitive constituencies to turn away from well-entrenched attitudes about and behaviors toward one another. If such push-back and resistance is anticipated and planned for, it is far less likely to undermine the shared purposes. Meta-leaders craft an alternate reward structure, through which stakeholders are acknowledged and encouraged for their work in building shared solutions. The compelling message, which is the theme of their meta-leadership work, should speak to what can be accomplished if these traditional rivalries can be replaced by the advantages of the shared enterprise.⁹³

Cohesion of action cannot begin in the moment of decision and action. It must be embedded into the thinking and activity of agencies and people, a purpose and mission upheld by meta-leaders. For this reason, designing cross-system connectivity of action is a strategic and methodological building endeavor, by which both the process and outcome of the effort attest to the value and benefits of working toward common purposes. As stakeholders experience the advantages of leveraging the knowledge, resources, and expertise of others, they recognize the benefit and added influence gained when their contributions are likewise leveraged by others. The efforts and connectivity generated by meta-leaders build a momentum of its own and impact and collaborative value both arise and thrive. Meta-leaders recognize that to keep the connected effort on

⁹² Boas Shamir, and Jane M. Howell, "Organizational and Contextual Influences on the Emergence and Effectiveness of Charismatic Leadership," *The Leadership Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (1999): 262, doi:10.1016/S1048-9843(99)00014-4.

⁹³ Ibid.

track, it must be carefully monitored and adjusted so that it remains current with new developments and demands.⁹⁴

F. CONCLUSION

Meta-leadership can be translated into five dimensions of practice: 1) the person of the leader and his awareness or problem assessment; 2) the problem, change, or crisis that compels response; 3) leading one's entity and/or operating in one's designated purview of authority; 4) leading up to bosses or those to whom one is accountable; and 5) leading cross-system connectivity.⁹⁵ Meta-leaders operate along these five domains of action, leveraging each dimension of thinking and practice as the situation or event dictates. Furthermore, the meta-leaders are constantly analyzing the situation and modifying their perspective in order to constantly integrate all resources seamlessly and in a timely manner.

⁹⁴ Nicholls, "Meta Leadership in Organisations," 21.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 6.

III. HURRICANE KATRINA

A. INTRODUCTION

The 2005 hurricane season was an exceptional year. Three of the six most intense Atlantic hurricanes ever documented occurred: Hurricane Wilma (ranked first), Hurricane Rita (fourth), and Hurricane Katrina (seventh).⁹⁶ However, Hurricane Katrina was the deadliest and most destructive that year. To this day, Katrina is the costliest natural disaster and the third deadliest hurricane in the history of the United States. With over 1,836 fatalities from the hurricane and subsequent floods, Katrina killed more people than any other storm since the 1928 Okeechobee hurricane. Total property damage is estimated at \$108 billion, roughly four times the damage from Hurricane Andrew in 1992.⁹⁷

When Hurricane Katrina made landfall near the Louisiana-Mississippi border on the morning of August 29, 2005, she exposed millions of Americans to extraordinary hardship. Katrina was the nation's "perfect storm" in that it devastated rural areas, urban centers, environmentally sensitive wetlands, timber and farmland, and impacted virtually every socio-economic group in the nation. Hurricane Katrina carved a swath of physical destruction, environmental devastation, and human suffering through Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Florida, Tennessee, Ohio, and Kentucky. The storm killed Americans in eight states.⁹⁸

B. FORMATION AND IMPACT

Hurricane Katrina developed initially as Tropical Depression #12 in the southeastern Bahamas on August 23. This tropical depression strengthened into Tropical Storm Katrina the next day. It then moved slowly along a northwesterly then westerly

⁹⁶ Ron McTaggart-Cowan et al., "Hurricane Katrina (2005). Part I: Complex Life Cycle of an Intense Tropical Cyclone," *Monthly Weather Review* 135, no. 12 (2007): 3905, doi:10.1175/2007MWR1875.1.

⁹⁷ Smith, *Hurricane Katrina: The Mississippi Story*, 17.

⁹⁸ John S. Petterson, "A Preliminary Assessment of Social and Economic Impacts Associated with Hurricane Katrina," *American Anthropologist* 108, no. 4 (December 2006): 647, accessed October 02, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/4496510?ref=no-x-route:07cad09f702c2d0ff0ca2f935c548747>. 643-670

track through the Bahamas, increasing in strength during this time. A few hours before landfall in south Florida (FL) at around 6:30 EDT on August 25, Katrina strengthened to become a Category 1 hurricane. Landfall occurred between Hallandale Beach and North Miami Beach, Florida with wind speeds of approximately 80 mph. Gusts of above 90 mph were measured as Katrina came ashore.⁹⁹ As the storm moved southwest across the tip of the Florida peninsula, Katrina's winds decreased slightly. The storm caused two deaths and moderate damage to a state still recovering from the devastating 2004 hurricane season in which the Florida peninsula endured an unprecedented four hurricanes. After spending only seven hours over land, Katrina quickly re-intensified shortly after moving into the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico and regained hurricane strength.

Katrina moved almost due westward after entering the Gulf of Mexico. A mid-level ridge centered over Texas weakened and moved westward allowing Katrina to gradually turn to the northwest and then north over the days that followed. Atmospheric and sea-surface conditions were conducive to the cyclone's rapid intensification, which lead to Katrina attaining "major hurricane" status on the afternoon of the August 26. The storm continued to strengthen and move northward during the next 48 hours. Katrina became a Category 5 storm Sunday morning, August 28 with maximum wind speeds of over 170 mph. Its minimum central pressure dropped that afternoon to 902 mb—the fourth lowest on record for an Atlantic storm.¹⁰⁰ Although Katrina, at its peak strength was comparable to Camille's intensity, it was a significantly larger storm and impacted a broader area of the Gulf Coast.

Hurricane Katrina's winds and storm surge reached the Mississippi coastline on the afternoon of August 28, 2005. The storm subsequently cut a path of destruction through central Mississippi over the next two days. Hurricane-force winds reached coastal Mississippi by 2 a.m. and the eye of the storm made landfall in Mississippi at 10

⁹⁹ David M. Simpson et al., "Understanding Critical Infrastructure Failure: Examining the Experience of Biloxi and Gulfport, Mississippi after Hurricane Katrina," *International Journal of Critical Infrastructures* 6, no. 3 (2010): 247, doi:10.1504/IJCIS.2010.033339.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 12.

a.m. Central Daylight Time (CDT) on August 29, 2005 in Pearlington, MS.¹⁰¹ The storm's powerful right front quadrant covered coastal Mississippi and southern Alabama. Katrina passed over Bay St. Louis as a Category 3 hurricane with winds over 120 mph and a devastating storm surge that entirely leveled some beachfront neighborhoods. Flooding occurred as far north as Interstate 10. Katrina was still a Category 1 storm when it impacted Jackson, the state capital almost 170 miles inland. All 82 counties in Mississippi were declared disaster areas, 49 of which received full federal assistance.¹⁰² Katrina was finally downgraded to a tropical storm at 7 p.m. that night over 200 miles from the ocean. Katrina remained a tropical storm until it passed into Tennessee late on the August 29.¹⁰³

The storm lasted over 17 hours, spawned 11 tornadoes, and produced a 32-foot storm surge that reached six to 12 miles inland. In addition, 55-foot sea waves pushed casino barges, boats, and debris into towns and left 238 people dead, 67 missing, and an estimated \$125 billion in damages.¹⁰⁴ Residents who refused to evacuate survived the 32-foot storm surge by climbing into the second-floor attics or knocking out walls and ceiling boards to climb onto the roof or nearby trees. Over 100 people were rescued from rooftops and trees in Mississippi during the height of the storm.

C. DEVASTATING SURGE

Katrina's storm surge was the most extensive, as well as the highest, in the documented history of the United States.¹⁰⁵ Large portions of Hancock County, Harrison County, and Jackson County, Mississippi's three coastal counties were inundated by the storm surge with flood inundation of almost 70 percent of the land mass, affecting most of the populated areas. Surge covered almost the entire lower half of Hancock County, destroying the coastal communities of Pearlington, Clermont Harbor, and Waveland and much of Bay St. Louis. The surge flowed up the Jourdan River, flooding the town of

¹⁰¹ Smith, *Hurricane Katrina: The Mississippi Story*, 36.

¹⁰² *A Failure of Initiative: Final Report*, 76.

¹⁰³ Smith, *Hurricane Katrina: The Mississippi Story*, 31.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 36.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 42.

Kiln. In Harrison County, Pass Christian was completely inundated, along with a narrow strip of land to the east along the coast, which includes the cities of Long Beach and Gulfport. The flooding was more extensive in communities such as D' Iberville, which borders the Back Bay of Biloxi. Biloxi, on a peninsula between the Back Bay and the coast was hard hit, especially the low-lying Point Cadet area.

In Jackson County, storm surge flowed up the Singing River, a wide river estuary, with the combined surge and freshwater floods cutting the county in half. Over 90 percent of Pascagoula, the easternmost coastal city in Mississippi, was flooded from surge. Other Jackson County communities such as Porteaux Bay and Gulf Shores were destroyed, and St. Martin was hard hit, along with Ocean Springs, Moss Point, Gautier, and Escatawpa.

Waves destroyed many historic buildings that had withstood previous storms, including Hurricane Camille. The surge gutted homes and buildings up to the third floor. In addition, the storm destroyed or damaged beyond repair almost 64,000 homes in the six lower counties and destroyed or severely damaged over 104,000 homes throughout the state.¹⁰⁶

Katrina's storm surge was a sustained, continuously growing high tide that kept building for hours. And when the water did recede back into the Gulf, it took everything with it—furniture, houses, automobiles, boats and countless hazardous household items. “Even the very accurate forecasts didn’t capture the magnitude and devastation,” said Eddie Favre, Mayor of Bay St. Louis. “It was the in and out of the surge that killed us. It carried everything away.”¹⁰⁷ “Our infrastructure was devastated,” Gulfport Mayor Brent Warr said. According to *A Failure of Initiative*,

The water came in, blew off manhole covers, then receded and caused a vacuum, sucking gators and DVD players and lots and lots of sand into water and sewer pipes. You couldn’t have backed a truck up to a manhole cover and dumped it in more effectively.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Simpson et al., “Understanding Critical Infrastructure Failure,” 255.

¹⁰⁷ *A Failure of Initiative: Final Report*, 133.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

The mayor of Biloxi, A. J. Holloway, told the *Biloxi Sun Herald*, “This is our tsunami.”¹⁰⁹ Many historic buildings were destroyed in Mississippi, including the cottages and second-story porches around the Beauvoir mansion, home of Jefferson Davis. Hundreds of irreplaceable Civil War-era artifacts from the Jefferson Davis home and museum were either lost or destroyed. In addition, the lower three floors of many high-rise casinos and hotels were gutted. Along with countless others affected by the hurricane, U.S. senator Trent Lott lost his Pascagoula home, and the boyhood home of Green Bay Packers quarterback Brett Favre was also totally destroyed. U.S. House Representative Gene Taylor, whose home was destroyed, recalls seeing complete and utter devastation on the ground and a telling sight in the air. “Birds were so tired all they could do was hold their wings out and soar on the wind,” he said. “Our seagulls, if I had to guess, ended up in Arkansas.”¹¹⁰

Several casinos, which were floated on barges to comply with Mississippi land-based gambling laws, were washed hundreds of yards inland by waves. A number of streets and bridges were washed away, including two bridge sections of U.S. Highway 90. Those two bridges connected the three coastal counties in the cities of Biloxi and Ocean Springs and the cities of Pass Christian and Bay St. Louis. With this destruction came great challenges in moving between the three coastal counties;¹¹¹ only Interstate 10 was left to connect the counties.

More than one million people in Mississippi were affected by the storm, and almost six months later, the extent of the loss in Mississippi was still described as “staggering” in *USA Today* on February 16, 2006:

The Mississippi Gulf Coast has been devastated. The extent of the devastation in Mississippi is also staggering. Since Katrina hit, more than half a million people in Mississippi have applied for assistance from FEMA. In a state of just 2.9 million residents, that means more than one in

¹⁰⁹ Holbrook Mohr, “Katrina’s Full Wrath Still Being Felt as Body Count Rises along U.S. Gulf Coast,” AP Worldstream, August 31, 2005, accessed August 17, 2014, http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P1-112655800.html?refid=easy_hf

¹¹⁰ Smith, *Hurricane Katrina: The Mississippi Story*, 44.

¹¹¹ William L. Waugh, “Economic Development and Reconstruction on the Gulf after Katrina,” *Economic Development Quarterly* 20, no. 3 (2006): 12, doi:10.1177/0891242406289287 211–218

six Mississippians have sought help. More than 97,000 people are still living in FEMA trailers and mobile homes. Another 5,000 to 6,000 are still waiting for FEMA trailers. Almost six months later, many neighborhoods are still piled high with storm debris.¹¹²

D. ECONOMIC IMPACT

The economic impact to Mississippi was enormous. Agricultural, forestry, gaming, and poultry industries were severely damaged. Of the 2,678 businesses located in the areas flooded by Katrina's storm surge, 1,827 received moderate to catastrophic damage resulting in 20,551 lost jobs.¹¹³ An additional 27,000 manufacturing workers lost their jobs to lay-offs while the plants were repaired, and in Gulfport, MS, over 28,000 jobs were lost.¹¹⁴ In total, Mississippi's unemployment rate spike by 2.2 percent in September 2005, with non-farm payrolls reduced by almost 30,000.¹¹⁵ The exact impact to the job market is difficult to estimate because so many Mississippians took temporary jobs in the recovery operations immediately after the storm.

Forest products account for a large portion of Mississippi's economic base. Timber lands cover over 19.6 million acres in the state. Mississippi produced over \$1.1 billion in forest products annually prior to August 2005.¹¹⁶ In the aftermath of Katrina, over nine million acres of timber land was heavily damaged or destroyed. This equates to over 12 billion board feet of timber lost with a total cost of lost timber estimated at \$474 million.¹¹⁷ Additionally, clearing damaged timber land and replanting cost over \$45 million.¹¹⁸

¹¹² Garry Mitchell, "Katrina: Mississippi Six Months Later," *USA Today* (Tysons Corner), February 12, 2006.

¹¹³ Sharon P. Brown, Sandra L. Mason, and Richard B. Tiller, "The Effect of Hurricane Katrina on Employment and Unemployment," *Monthly Labor Review*, August 2006, 53.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹¹⁵ Waugh, "Economic Development and Reconstruction on the Gulf after Katrina," 215.

¹¹⁶ Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, *Hurricane Katrina: Economic Impacts 3 1/2 Months after Landfall* (Washington, DC: Department of Commerce, 2005), 7.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹¹⁸ Randy Schnepf, and Ralph M. Chite, *U.S. Agriculture after Hurricane Katrina Status and Issues* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2005), 21.

The Mississippi Gulf Coast was home to 69 seafood processing plants valued at \$101.3 million; all 69 plants were destroyed. Additionally, the seafood industry in Mississippi generated annual revenues of \$123.7 million. Moreover, Mississippi had 351 registered shrimp boats prior to Katrina that harvested over \$23 million in shrimp, and all but a few of the boats were destroyed by the storm. Furthermore, the environmental impact to the Mississippi Sound precluded any shrimp harvesting for over six months after the storm.

Agriculture in Mississippi was decimated by Katrina. Over 87 percent of the state's corn crop, 50 percent of the rice production, and over 100,000 bales of cotton were destroyed by Katrina with a market value of over \$108 million.¹¹⁹ In addition, crops as far north as the Mississippi Delta were damaged or destroyed by tropical force winds and heavy rains.

Second only to the timber industry in Mississippi is poultry production. Katrina killed 6.2 million birds valued at over \$15 million. Additionally, the storm destroyed 2,400 poultry barns with a replacement cost of over \$6 million. Cattle were also affected by the storm. Mississippi's livestock impact was over 10,000 head of cattle killed or displaced with a market value of \$8 million.¹²⁰

The Mississippi Gulf Coast had 13 casinos when Hurricane Katrina struck.¹²¹ Each of these casinos was water-borne to comply with Mississippi gaming laws. The storm surge and high winds tore every barge from its moorings and completely destroyed the coast's gaming industry. The casino industry was the foundation of Mississippi's \$2.87 billion annual tourism industry. Moreover, the daily losses to the tourism industry after Katrina were \$7.7 million. The casinos generated \$500,000 per day in tax revenue to the state, which was 10 percent of the state's tax revenues.¹²²

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 23.

¹²⁰ Waugh, "Economic Development and Reconstruction on the Gulf after Katrina," 215.

¹²¹ Randall L. Patton, "Resorting to Casinos: The Mississippi Gambling Industry," *Enterprise & Society* 8, no. 2, Special Issue: Business and Nature (June 2007): 470, accessed September 10, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/23701005?ref=no-x-route:f59d55b0d818ddb639e73a8c178f207c>.

¹²² Simpson et al., "Understanding Critical Infrastructure Failure," 250.

In 2005, the Port of Gulfport was the third busiest container port in the Gulf of Mexico. The port had 2,058 permanent direct maritime jobs and handled 2.4 million short tons of commodities. Additionally, 96 percent of the commerce was foreign-based with bananas accounting for 30 percent of the tonnage. The Port of Gulfport's electrical power supply, roads, water, sewer, rail, small craft harbor, navigational aids, and lighting were all destroyed by Katrina. Furthermore, approximately 430,000 square feet of warehouses and freezer facilities were destroyed.¹²³

In addition, Katrina destroyed 27 percent of major roads and nine percent of all rail lines in Mississippi.¹²⁴ The cost of disruption to the coast's intermodal transportation systems amounted to over \$1 million per day with a total cost of \$473 million.¹²⁵

Perhaps the most devastating impact of Katrina was to the housing infrastructure. Mississippi had over 220,384 homes impacted by the storm with almost 104,000 severely damaged or destroyed.¹²⁶ After the storm, FEMA delivered 48,000 FEMA trailers for the displaced residents throughout the region.¹²⁷

Hurricane Katrina wrecked property and lives. The effects of the devastation will last for generations. However, in Mississippi, the people on the coast and throughout the state immediately began the monumental task of cleaning up. After almost a decade of recovery, the coast is better than it has ever been thanks to the efforts of many Mississippians.

¹²³ Chad R. Miller, "Institutional Legacy as the Driver of Port Development Strategy: The Case of the Port of Gulfport," *Public Works Management & Policy* 19, no. 1 (2013): 6, doi:10.1177/1087724X13512279

¹²⁴ Simpson et al., "Understanding Critical Infrastructure Failure," 263.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 266.

¹²⁶ Waugh, "Economic Development and Reconstruction on the Gulf after Katrina," 11.

¹²⁷ *A Failure of Initiative: Final Report*, 272.

IV. CASE STUDY—GOVERNOR BARBOUR—LEADERSHIP DURING HURRICANE KATRINA

A. INTRODUCTION

Haley R. Barbour's election as governor of Mississippi in 2003 marked the largest voter turnout in Mississippi gubernatorial history, and he was reelected in 2007 with 58.2 percent of the vote.¹²⁸ The Yazoo City, Mississippi native is the second governor since Reconstruction to be elected to a second consecutive term as Mississippi's chief executive. As Mississippi's sixty-third governor, his strategic goals focused on civil justice reform, controlling spending, prudent management of the state health care program, and new attention on Mississippi as an energy producing state that can help meet America's energy needs in the future. His team generated numerous large economic projects in the energy, aerospace, and automotive fields, including the selection by Toyota for Blue Springs, MS, as its newest U.S. auto assembly plant. In Barbour's eight years as governor, per capita income in the state increased by 34 percent.¹²⁹

B. THE PLAN

As a governor, as a national party chairman and political director for the White House, Governor Barbour recognized that a leader's job is to put together a good team and empower them to act independently of their leader but collaboratively among themselves. Barbour made excellent choices for his cabinet. Ranging from his Executive Director of the Emergency Management Agency to his National Guard's Adjutant General to his Commissioner of Public Safety, Barbour selected leaders with extensive credentials and proven records of success rather than focusing on the appointment of cabinet members whose loyalty was valued over competence and honesty. Barbour's guidance to his cabinet early on in his term was, "If you think you know what to do, do it. Don't come ask me when you think you know what to do. If you think you know what to

¹²⁸ Sid Salter, "Sunday Morning with Haley Reeves Barbour," *Clarion-Ledger* (Jackson, MS), November 1, 2004.

¹²⁹ Alan Greenblatt, "Steady in a Storm: Reassuring and Rebuilding Mississippi after Katrina," *Governing*, April 15, 2006, accessed August 13, 2014, <http://www.governing.com/poy/Haley-Barbour.html>

do, do it. And if you screw up, we'll clean up.”¹³⁰ In addition, Governor Barbour believed in delegating both responsibility and authority. He led his administration by providing vision and guidance and then allowing his subordinates to develop strategies within their organizations.

Mississippi had two “dress rehearsals” in preparation for its response to Hurricane Katrina. In September 2004, Hurricane Ivan, a deadly Category 3 storm, made landfall in Pensacola, FL. Initial projections forecast the storm to make landfall along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. These predictions caused the largest evacuation of the coast since Hurricane Frederic in 1979.¹³¹ In July 2005, Hurricane Dennis made landfall in Gulf Shores, AL. The predicted path of this Category 4 storm included the Mississippi coast. Again, Mississippians took this storm seriously and evacuations were ordered in Jackson and Harrison Counties. Hurricane Dennis made a dramatic move to the east only hours before landfall and struck Santa Rosa Island, FL as a Category 3 storm. These near misses provided Governor Barbour and his cabinet members an opportunity to refine their plans. Additionally, the preparations for these two storms allowed the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) leadership to begin to build a rapport with their Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) counterparts.

Hurricanes Ivan and Dennis provided Governor Barbour some experience in leading during disaster situations. He convened press conferences in advance of both storms to urge self-preparedness and self-preservation. Barbour learned himself from the preparations needed in advance of the two previous storms. He stated:

As you get later into the disaster, you go from preparation to executing. I will say good leaders learn, and this was a great learning experience for me: the single most important thing to get ready for a mega disaster is to prepare and to drive in to the public's mind self-preparation. No government is big enough to do everything for everybody all the time. And we don't want a government that big. We can't afford a government that big and we don't want one. We tried to teach people to prepare themselves. We did a better job of this after Katrina. 'There's a storm in the gulf; what are you going to do? Where are you going? When are you

¹³⁰ Haley Barbour, interview with author, August 7, 2014.

¹³¹ *Hurricane Katrina: A Nation Still Unprepared*, 217.

going to board up your house? When are you going to put away things that are outside that could blow away and bust up your neighbor's house? Do you have your medicine, do you have some water? What's the route you're going to take to get there? Have you got a radio, a radio that runs on batteries? Does somebody know where you're going to be?' It's not like a long list, but as you know, every time before and as Katrina approached, we preached to the public—through the radio, TV, newspapers, be prepared. Because self-preparation is so important. So teach self-preparation and then, of course, you prepare. I thought we prepared pretty well for a hurricane but it turns out that we didn't get the hurricane we prepared for. It was no comparison to anything that had ever happened.¹³²

C. PRE-KATRINA: THE EVACUATION

As tragic as the loss of 238 Mississippians in Katrina was, the loss of life could have been much worse. The evacuations from the lower coastal areas were the largest in recorded history. On Saturday night, August 27, Dr. Max Mayfield, then Director of the National Hurricane Center, called Governor Barbour to emphasize just how dangerous of a storm Hurricane Katrina was. Barbour and his wife, Marsha, were at their home in Yazoo City, MS. The Governor's Mansion switchboard patched Dr. Mayfield through to the governor. Barbour told Mayfield, "Doctor, if you want to do something to help, you get the news media to start saying this storm's going to be like Camille. People in Mississippi know what that means."¹³³ Barbour's understanding of the severity of the storm and his grasp of how negatively Hurricane Camille affected three generations of Mississippians 36 years later drove the decision making of national, state, and local leaders and convinced thousands to take precautions that ultimately saved lives. That night (Saturday), Mayfield got the Weather Channel and the networks to start referring to this as a storm like Camille. Mayfield's warning was important because people had hurricane fatigue from the two previous warnings of Ivan and Dennis. Consequently, Sunday's evacuation numbers increased dramatically. Coastal residents took heed and moved inland.

¹³² Haley Barbour, interview with author, August 7, 2014.

¹³³ Ibid.

Barbour called former U.S. Senator Trent Lott to warn of the severity of the storm. Lott told Barbour that he was not concerned about his coastal home in Pascagoula, MS and that he was not going to board it up or take other precautions. Barbour told Lott, “Trent you’ve got to. This could be a bad storm and not taking the precautions sets a poor example.”¹³⁴ Lott acquiesced and had his home boarded up. In the end, it did not matter. Lott’s home was one of the over 100,000 homes in Mississippi destroyed by Katrina.

Barbour had to use some innovative thinking when it came to forcing a few nursing homes to evacuate. The privately run homes knew the difficulties and expense associated with an evacuation. However, the homes that would not evacuate received a great deal of funding from Medicaid. Barbour’s solution was to get the Director of Medicaid to call and in each instance, according to Barbour, “they got a better attitude” concerning the evacuation of their residents.¹³⁵ Every nursing home in the coastal counties was evacuated prior to landfall, a move that ultimately saved many lives.

D. THE SITUATION

Hurricane Katrina made landfall in Mississippi in the early morning hours of Monday, August 29. The storm was so large and intense that there could not be any movement of response personnel from the central and northern parts of the state until the storm passed Hattiesburg at 5 pm on the August 29. Barbour waited the storm out in Jackson with the executive director of the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency. Reports of damage were sporadic as the day progressed. Communications with coastal emergency managers was lost just after noon on Monday.

Early on Tuesday morning, Governor Barbour flew to the coast on the state’s twin engine plane. He landed at the Gulfport/Biloxi airport, which was also home to the Mississippi Air National Guard’s Combat Readiness Training Center (CRTC). At the CRTC, Barbour received a preliminary damage assessment from Adjutant General Harold Cross and then boarded a National Guard UH-60 helicopter for an aerial damage

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ *Hurricane Katrina: A Nation Still Unprepared*, 409.

assessment. Accompanying Barbour were Cross, MEMA Executive Director Robert Latham, and FEMA Federal Coordinating Officer William (Bill) Carwile.

What Barbour saw almost defied imagination. The entire area of the coast south of Interstate 10 was virtually annihilated. The primary east-west transportation corridor was U.S. Highway 90. The storm surge had destroyed wide swaths of the highway. The mile-long bridges that spanned the Biloxi Bay that connected Harrison and Jackson Counties and the bridge that spanned Bay St. Louis connecting Harrison and Hancock Counties were completely destroyed. Every home in Harrison County located between the Gulf and the CSX railway was destroyed by the massive storm surge. Barbour's description of the initial helicopter flight:

There were huge areas where no structures were standing and everything was gray. I—I couldn't—I couldn't grasp why was everything gray. Because I had flown in, landed at Gulfport, just gotten right on a helicopter—I hadn't noticed at first, but of course everything was gray because it was covered in debris waist deep or head deep or, in some cases, 25 feet deep. And in many, many places, no building survived. Commercial buildings had a better chance of surviving, but you would see where hundreds of houses had been and none of them survived. That day they were all covered in debris. Later we created the verb 'slabbed'—the verb for 'my house was nothing left but a slab.'¹³⁶

After Barbour completed his aerial reconnaissance and the gravity of the situation became apparent, the first order of business was to establish a true chain of command and to determine whether or not the state's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan was applicable to such an historic, catastrophic disaster. Barbour convened a meeting of key cabinet members as well as the county emergency managers from the six southern counties. It was immediately agreed upon that MEMA would operate a Unified Command Group that would base operations in Jackson, MS to coordinate the federal and interstate responses and a State Emergency Response Team Advance (SERT-A) on the coast. Governor Barbour briefed all parties that, as governor, he would be the incident commander. Barbour was very clear, however, that the coastal leadership, as well as the state-level leaders, were empowered to make decisions without fear of "micro-

¹³⁶ Haley Barbour, interview with author, August 7, 2014.

management” from his office. Barbour quoted one of his Washington business partners in his guidance to his leaders, “No options, no problems. If you don’t have any choice, you just do what you have to do.”¹³⁷

Barbour’s recollection of the initial meeting:

And I think that is one of the things that Mississippi did well, that we—we were dealing with unknown, uncharted ground and made decisions that were decisions of first impression—that—one of the keys that I think for what we did was that first, everybody realized that somebody had to be in charge. And the only logical person to be in charge was the Governor.

So the local officials—which as many of them were Democrats as Republicans—and yet they all agreed, or accepted, that I would be in charge. And some of them agreed with the decisions I made, some of them didn’t, but we worked together. We worked together very well. They always knew that they had access to me and that I was going to at least give them a fair hearing. We also—I’m also proud of the fact that I made a lot of decisions that we ultimately saw weren’t working as well as we thought they would, so we changed them. Because that’s one of—that’s a part of leadership that is often ignored. You show me someone who’s never made a bad decision, and I’ll show you someone who’s never made a decision. But more, fundamentally, when you’re the leader after this kind of incredible catastrophe, it’s hard to imagine what you face.¹³⁸

Once the command relationship was established, Barbour worked hard to get the word out to the state and to the nation describing the utter devastation. He considered it his primary function as governor to describe what Katrina had done to his state. His intent was to relay the severity in enough detail to get the thousands of volunteers and responders to stay away from the impacted area until the search and rescue operations had culminated and the roads were clear. This was a Herculean effort given the amount of media attention focused on the coast of Mississippi and New Orleans. Barbour fully understood that any additional assets flowing into the area would be more of a hindrance than a help as the coast began to search for its missing residents.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Haley Barbour, interview with author, August 7, 2014.

Barbour's recollection of the initial press briefings:

To stand up and to have to tell the public through the press, 'Here's what's down there.' That was hard, but they needed to know the truth. And you remember, we told them 'you can't go there; we're not going to allow the public to come down there yet' for a variety of reasons. Certainly, search and rescue was one of the reasons. There were no roads to drive on in lots of area and they would just get in the way while we were trying to see if there were any survivors and to recover the bodies of the people there, and also the security purposes, the fewer people that are running around, the better. The public accepted that. By and large, people waited. We didn't make them wait but, I don't remember, three or four days. But when you have to tell people you can't go down there because it's so bad, the public, I'm sure, was shocked but they needed to hear the truth. And that's—I think that was a very important thing that we did. We repeatedly tried to give people an accurate picture and we did that for months and years.¹³⁹

The inability of FEMA to get life-sustaining commodities into the impacted region became readily apparent to Barbour and his staff. Barbour recognized that assigning blame rather than focusing on solving the problem was counterproductive. On Thursday, September 1, Barbour called a meeting with key National Guard, MEMA and FEMA representatives to work on a resolution to the water and Meal Ready to Eat (MRE) issues. FEMA reported that it simply could not get an accurate assessment of where the commodities were and in what quantities. Barbour was told it would be several days before an accurate assessment of the disposition of the commodities would be available. Realizing that this was not acceptable, Barbour asked Major General Cross to explore military avenues for acquiring MREs and water. Cross immediately contacted the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA). Within 24 hours, C-5, C-17, and C-130 aircraft were delivering MREs and water to the Air National Guard Base at Gulfport. Ultimately, over 1.2 million MREs and almost one million gallons of bottled water were delivered by the military.¹⁴⁰

Barbour did not wait for the military deliveries to begin. He tasked MEMA with finding vendors in-state. Tons of ice and water were delivered from vendors throughout the state. Barbour leveraged his relationship with the Helton family from Yazoo City,

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ *Hurricane Katrina: A Nation Still Unprepared*, 226.

who owned the local ice business, and the family immediately provided all of their available resources to the coast. By Friday afternoon, the National Guard and local first responders were delivering much needed commodities to the stricken coast.

Barbour continuously pushed his cabinet members to think big and not get fixated on status quo. Barbour began getting reports of rural residents located miles inland who could not travel to obtain life-sustaining commodities due to trees and other debris blocking roadways. Barbour tasked Major General Cross to investigate using his helicopters to reach these stranded residents. Army aviators located over 1,000 Mississippians stranded due to the timber destruction and immediately began delivering food, water, medicine, baby formula, and other critical supplies.

During the first week, Barbour was working diligently to ensure that President Bush, FEMA, and Department of Defense were aware of the situation. Barbour realized that the more information passed to Capitol Hill, the more federal funding would flow into the state. Barbour also knew that with federal monetary assistance came federal offers of leadership.

Barbour described his relationship with FEMA and Federal Coordinating Officer Bill Carwile:

Bill Carwile came in and we had agreed to have a unified command. I said that sounds good as long as it reports to me; it doesn't report to Washington. They said we'll work that out at—and Carwile and I talked about it and he said we're not going to have any problem with them. He said certain things have to be reported back to federal superiors, but for calling the shots, he accepted that Mississippi knows more about Mississippi than Washington knows about Mississippi. So with Bill—so we had a unified command. That worked very well. We worked together well, it reduced duplication, but it also had a lot of camaraderie. It was not antagonistic.¹⁴¹

The next challenge from federal officials came from Lieutenant General Russell Honore, the Commander of First U.S. Army. Barbour and President Bush had discussed the issues in New Orleans and whether or not the entire response should be federalized, that is, putting a federal official in charge of the overall response. Barbour had previously

¹⁴¹ Haley Barbour, interview with author, August 7, 2014.

met Honore and had a great deal of respect for the general. However, Barbour knew that the way active duty forces would respond differed greatly from the way the National Guard responded. Most importantly, active component forces are forbidden by the Posse Comitatus Act from performing law enforcement actions. Secondly, active component forces do not, as a general rule, understand the local systems of government and how they were expected to interact with local responders. Last, Barbour fully understood that federalizing the response would usurp his authority, that of his adjutant general, and that of the other state-level officials. Barbour quickly thanked the president and General Honore for the offer but instead elected to request thousands of National Guardsmen under the Emergency Management Assistance Compact and placed those troops under the command and control of Major General Cross. This move left Barbour as the Commander in Chief of all military forces operating in Mississippi.¹⁴²

During the first week of response operations, Governor Barbour focused his efforts on getting the necessary commodities and responders to the impacted area while strongly discouraging volunteer organizations, private citizens, and corporate interests from coming to the coast and becoming part of the problem rather than part of the solution. Barbour recognized that he would become the “face of Katrina response” and would shape the response and recovery activities for months and years.

What Governor Barbour did not do is interfere with his cabinet’s and the local emergency management directors’ efforts. Barbour knew that each of these individuals knew his or her job and any interference by him would slow the response. In addition, he fully understood the strategic role he played and that his place was not trying to run the tactical response. The governor had selected cabinet members who were good leaders, and he had confidence in their abilities to guide their organizations during this disaster. Furthermore, he understood the saying, “all disasters start and end locally.” The county and city leaders throughout the state knew how to respond in their jurisdictions. His job was to coordinate for federal aid in the form of manpower and funding, not to direct the response at the city and county level.

¹⁴² *Hurricane Katrina: A Nation Still Unprepared*, 99.

E. RECOVERY

By the following Monday after the storm hit, Governor Barbour knew that the response phase was over and that the state was entering the recovery phase. Quickly, Barbour formulated his plan for the recovery effort in Mississippi. His first task in the recovery phase was to issue guidance that would shape the way all Mississippians would begin to rebuild their lives.

Barbour on his concept of recovery:

Four times in our history our state has suffered from a mega disaster: The Civil War, the flood of 1927, Hurricane Camille, which was an awful hurricane and much more powerful than Katrina as far as wind velocity was concerned. Camille was a smaller-sized mega disaster, and then this one, Katrina. I was determined that we were going to rebuild the Coast and south Mississippi back bigger and better than it was, because we had not done that after Camille.

In 1927, during the flood in the Delta where I'm from, the homes of both sets of my grandparents flooded and there was very little help after it.

After the Civil War, no help at all.

After Katrina I felt we were going to have a chance to get help and I was determined we were going to use that help to build the Coast back bigger and better than it was. Really all of south Mississippi. Pretty quickly it became obvious what the three priorities are: If your goal is to get people to return to their communities and rebuild their communities, they've got to believe they can work; they've got to believe they can have housing; they've got to believe their kids can go to school. If you don't get schools back open, they're not coming back. And this was clearly my goal. I knew Tuesday, the 30th of August we were going to be years and years rebuilding, getting the Coast back to what it could be. But that was one of my goals that I said repeatedly: 'We're not going to build the Coast back like it was, we're going to build the Coast back like it can be.' And that's not for Jackson to decide, it's not for Washington to decide what should the Coast be like, it should be the people on the Coast who decide.¹⁴³

Barbour repeatedly reiterated to his staff and cabinet: jobs, homes and schools. Each was interconnected with the other and essential to rebuilding the coast. Every action associated with one had to consider the other two. Governor Barbour was totally

¹⁴³ Haley Barbour, interview with author, August 7, 2014.

cognizant of the fact that if people left the coast, especially those with professional degrees, the likelihood of getting them to move back was slim. Getting the businesses and schools back open and getting a place for coastal residents to stay was paramount to coastal recovery. He knew there was competition for Mississippi's most important resource, its people:

I thought it was better to let people start rebuilding, to give people confidence, to give people hope, to let people say, 'Biloxi is going to come back'; 'Gulfport is going to come back.' 'This is going to be a great place to live, I want to live here.' Within a week of the storm, doctors and nurses on the Coast started getting calls from hospitals in Atlanta, Birmingham and Nashville, Memphis, Shreveport, Dallas saying, 'come practice here. Your hospital's gone, come move to Dallas.' And we were competing—and it wasn't just healthcare workers. We were competing to keep those people on the Coast. I thought, and still think, progress that is at least weekly if not daily was really important to people, that they felt like 'I'm living in this crummy, cramped FEMA trailer, but it's worth it because my town is going to be back and I'm going to be part of it so I can put up with this.' I'm sure after three years some of them would have liked to have shot the governor who gave them that attitude.¹⁴⁴

1. Jobs

Barbour immediately understood that debris removal was not only critical to beginning of the recovery phase but also essential in creating jobs. Immediately after the storm, public works departments along the coast, augmented by thousands of National Guardsmen, cleared debris out of roadways simply by pushing the debris into the ditches and sides of the roads. These efforts were stopgaps to facilitate search and rescue and to allow for freedom of movement. By the end of the first week in September, public works departments, county road crews and National Guard Engineers had cleared over 4,000 miles of roads.¹⁴⁵ This is equivalent to clearing a two-lane highway from the tip to Maine to the southern end of California. However, the debris had to be completely removed from property and properly disposed of. This was no simple feat in that the storm created over 46 million cubic yards of debris. For an historical perspective, Hurricane Andrew, the previous most expensive storm to clean up after, created only 22 million cubic yards

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ *A Failure of Initiative: Final Report*, 73.

of debris, and it took 11 months to completely haul off, bury or burn 46 million cubic yards of debris. It also took 11 months for Florida to clean up all of the debris from Hurricane Andrew.¹⁴⁶ Mississippi cleaned up over twice as much debris in the same amount of time.¹⁴⁷ This was significant in getting the coast postured for the rebuilding phase.

Governor Barbour knew just how negatively the industrial base on the Gulf Coast had been hit. Shipbuilding and fishing were two of the most important sources of income for the coastal population, and so too was the casino industry and tourism. Each of these sectors was essentially wiped out. Furthermore, it would be months before shipbuilding could resume and could be years before the casinos could be rebuilt. Much of the fishing fleet was destroyed and there was nothing of interest for tourists to come see, unless it was utter devastation. Barbour realized that until the infrastructure was rebuilt, at least to a level that the major industries could re-open, that temporary jobs would be the norm. With over 47,000 workers suddenly out of work, Barbour focused on the occupational sector that offered the most jobs: debris removal. Barbour was adamant that all debris removal contractors would be Mississippians. He did not want to “outsource” jobs to out-of-state businesses. Furthermore, as much as possible, Barbour mandated that the truck drivers, heavy machine operators, administrative clerks, ditch diggers—and every facet of the clean-up worker—be from the areas impacted by the storm. In addition, he insisted that this was foremost a Mississippi disaster and that Mississippians would clean up the mess. Consequently, unemployment rates went from over 20 percent immediately after the storm to 10 percent by January 2006.¹⁴⁸ Barbour petitioned Secretary of Labor, Elaine Chao, to sign a national emergency for more than \$100 million to create 25,000 temporary jobs in the disaster areas, largely to assist in clean-up and recovery efforts.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ Smith, *Hurricane Katrina: The Mississippi Story*, 127.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 130.

¹⁴⁸ Mississippi Gulf Coast Business Council, *Mississippi Gulf Coast 3.0: Three Years after Katrina*, 2008, accessed September 03, 2014, <http://mississippirenewal.com/documents/ThreeYearReport.pdf>

¹⁴⁹ *A Failure of Initiative: Final Report*, 417.

Governor Barbour starting calling on business and industry leaders on the coast to get their businesses opened as soon as possible. Chevron Global Refining, located in Pascagoula, MS, was one of the first to respond. Prior to Katrina, the refinery produced 325,000 barrels of refined products per day and employed over 3,700 workers.¹⁵⁰ Barbour realized that Chevron's restarting of the refinery was essential not only to the coast, but also to the entire nation's economy. The second order effects of Katrina's destruction on the coast were beginning to impact the nation. Chevron refines the majority of jet fuel used at East Coast airports. Therefore, getting jet fuel refined was essential to the entire airline industry. Key to recovery was the restoration of power to the facility. Barbour, as well as other elected officials from the coast, worked closely with Mississippi Power to get the power lines and sub-stations back online for the refinery. There was a great deal of debate on whether power restoration should be to individuals or to businesses. Barbour led the effort to convince the public that getting power back to large employers was essential in getting the coast back on its feet. As a result, the refinery commenced refining operations on September 12, and over 1,000 workers were back at work. Chevron opened temporary housing facilities that housed over 1,100 workers and their families. By the end of September, Chevron was operating at 56 percent of its pre-Katrina operation level.¹⁵¹

Barbour's call for jobs and housing was answered by other companies on the coast. The Oreck Corporation is a family-owned vacuum manufacturer based in New Orleans, LA with its sole manufacturing plant on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Company founder David Oreck worked closely with the Barbour administration in getting his plant back up and operational in the aftermath of the storm. Oreck brought in dozens of campers for employees and continued to pay all employees, regardless of whether they returned to work. Oreck also brought in medical services, food, water, generators, and all essentials to provide for his employees. Barbour recognized Oreck's commitment and ensured critical services such as water, sewer, and power were supplied to Oreck's

¹⁵⁰ Chevron Corporation, "Chevron Updates Activities in Gulf Region after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita," news release, October 5, 2005, accessed September 17, 2014, <http://www.chevron.com/news/press/Release/?id=2005-10-05>

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

375,000 square foot Long Beach, MS plant. As a result, the plant was back in operation 10 days after the storm. Within a week of re-opening, the plant was operating at pre-storm capacity. The company said that, by getting its facilities up and running, it was able to provide its employees motivation to continue to rebuild after the storm. “Essentially, when we turned the light on, the message that we were giving our people was that they had a basis for hope,” Oreck says. “They were able to see a path towards a normal life again.”¹⁵²

One unemployment issue that was unforeseen by many was the issue of voluntary unemployment. Many coastal residents took advantage of being able to draw unemployment while they were rebuilding their homes. In most cases, these were highly specialized employees from the shipyards, oil refineries, or construction industries. It was important to the Barbour administration, once it was discovered that a great many qualified laborers were staying home to affect necessary repairs that these people return to work in order to get businesses open and operational and to get taxes flowing into the city, county, and state coffers. When federally subsidized unemployment benefits were about to expire, Louisiana officials requested an extension. Mississippi did not. The immediate effect was a large-scale return to work by over 26,000 workers. In fact, by April 2006, there were 1500 more Mississippians employed than were before Hurricane Katrina struck.¹⁵³

2. Homes

The massive destruction caused by Katrina left more than 100,000 Mississippians homeless. Temporary options such as hotels, apartments, and condominiums were not available because they too were destroyed by the storm. This left state and federal officials with only one viable option: to ship in thousands of temporary trailers. The ensuing FEMA temporary housing mission became the largest and fastest deployment of travel trailers and mobile homes in FEMA history.¹⁵⁴ To expedite operations, FEMA

¹⁵² Jill Russell, “Cleaning Up Disaster,” *Appliance Magazine*, December 2005, accessed August 03, 2014, <http://www.appliancemagazine.com/>

¹⁵³ Brown, Mason, and Tiller, “The Effect of Hurricane Katrina,” 68.

¹⁵⁴ Mississippi Gulf Coast Business Council, *Mississippi Gulf Coast 3.0*.

utilized in-stock travel trailers or enacted pre-existing contracts with companies to provide temporary housing units. The initial deployment of trailers was extremely slow. This was attributed to the complicated nature of procuring trailers, identifying and inspecting suitable sites, dealing with the massive debris removal operations, and the establishment of utilities to sustain the trailers. Barbour pushed hard throughout September and October to cut through the bureaucracy associated with federal contracting and with site inspections. He did not want to establish large trailer parks. He wanted displaced residents to live in trailers on their own property. He realized that this gave them a sense of ownership and ensured that the thousands of vacant lots caused by the storm would not remain vacant indefinitely. Once operations began running at maximum efficiency, more than 500 travel trailers were placed each day, and by January 1, 2006, there were 34,000 units in operation. That number peaked at 38,000 in May 2006 before beginning a steady decline as housing stock began to be replenished. Collectively, more than 45,000 temporary housing units were occupied in Mississippi after Hurricane Katrina.¹⁵⁵

Barbour was determined to give coastal residents a “sense of place,” that is, a belief that what was theirs before the storm was still theirs. As the rebuilding efforts began in earnest in 2006, Barbour pushed for the infrastructure efforts to commence even if the lots where people’s homes were destroyed had not been cleared. His reasoning was that he wanted all necessary public utilities ready to connect to homes and trailers when the former residents returned:

We would get general debris removal, clean off the streets and the rights of way, and then we would lay new water and sewer lines. And that’s great as you’re always trying to have a fast pace. Except if we left too many houses that had been totally ruined, the government doesn’t clean up that private property typically. Then later the private owner goes in there and hires somebody to clean up his debris from his house on his lot, and his contractor breaks the water and sewer line by driving a big piece of equipment over the lines. I can’t tell you how many times that happened, and we just had to make a decision. It is better to let that happen than for people to say ‘I can’t rebuild my house because they haven’t put in water

¹⁵⁵ Office of Governor Haley Barbour, *Five Years after Katrina: Progress Report on Recovery, Rebuilding and Renewal* (Jackson, MS: Office of Governor Haley Barbour, 2010), 16.

and sewer.’ And so God knows we spent a lot of money repairing and replacing water and sewer lines that got broken after it had been reinstalled. Still, it was worth it because people came back quickly.¹⁵⁶

3. Schools

Hurricane Katrina impacted Mississippi’s schools throughout the state. The school year was barely a week old when the storm struck. Sixteen schools were completely destroyed, 24 received severe damage, and 263 schools received mild to moderate damage.¹⁵⁷ Of Mississippi’s 152 school districts, only 14 did not miss any school days due to the storm.¹⁵⁸ In addition to the damage and destruction to their facilities, school superintendents were dealing with displaced students, displaced faculty, and staff and the severe psychological issues associated with the devastation that was Katrina.

Dr. Hank M. Bounds was the State Superintendent of Education and brought with him a wealth of knowledge and expertise and an experienced, dedicated staff. Before being named the State Superintendent in August 2005, Dr. Bounds served as superintendent of the Pascagoula, MS School District. He previously was principal of two high schools and one K-12 school. Bounds was intimately familiar with the coast and knew all of the key educators in the southern counties. He understood Governor Barbour’s concerns about permanently losing the coast’s population if schools, jobs, and housing issues were not addressed. Bounds was determined to get the schools opened before the beginning of November. Despite the widespread damage, lack of fuel, electricity, cellular phone service, and land cleared of debris, all school districts were opened by mid-October. The final school district, Bay St. Louis-Waveland, reopened on November 7 when its portable buildings arrived from the manufacturer.

Both Dr. Bounds and Governor Barbour fully understood that the key to getting the schools opened by November was getting Congress and the U.S. Department of

¹⁵⁶ Haley Barbour, interview with author, August 7, 2014.

¹⁵⁷ Hank M. Bounds, *Mississippi Department of Education Report to the Governor* (Jackson, MS: Mississippi Department of Education, 2006), 1.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

Education to change its funding policies on assisting students impacted by the storm. Barbour and Bounds travelled to Washington, DC to present their recommendations to Congress and the Department of Education in September 2005. Governor Barbour's recollection of the visit:

The Bush Administration's education plan was to give money to school districts that took in dislocated children. The children who had gone to school at Biloxi or, more often, who had gone to school in New Orleans, went to Houston or wherever. The program would give Houston schools money, so much per displaced student that they have taken in. Well, I got Hank and we went to Washington and met with the Secretary of Education and with, interestingly, John Boehner, who at the time wasn't Speaker of the House, he was Chairman of the House Education Committee. And Hank laid out for Margaret Spellings, the Secretary of Education, our plan: 'We're going to have all our kids back in school in Mississippi in November and under your plan you're not going to give us any help. Your plan ought to reward and encourage people to get their schools back open and, instead, you're going to give X-thousand dollars per child whose schools are still closed.' Margaret, to her credit, said, 'you know, you're right. Let us look at it.' Then we went and saw Boehner and Boehner agreed. Boehner's Chief of Staff was Paula Nowakowski who had worked for me at the RNC [Republican National Committee], but Paula didn't have to twist his arm. Boehner saw it and as it turned out, a large percentage of the federal aid in the wake of Katrina went to schools that got reopened. Mississippi K-12 schools received more than \$350 million where we would have received next to nothing under the original plan. But, again, that was critical to getting people to come home.

Mississippi's schools received over \$323 million in federal dollars through the Hurricane Katrina Education Recovery Act: they received \$100 million in Emergency Impact Aid for Displaced Students, \$222 million through the Immediate Aid to Restart School Operations, and \$687,000 in funds for homeless education.¹⁵⁹

In addition to federal assistance, Mississippi schools received tremendous assistance from across the state and across the country due to Dr. Bounds' and his staff's diligence. Donations of goods and services, as well as monetary donations, helped the schools, teachers, and students in a myriad of ways from the day after the hurricane

¹⁵⁹ Hurricane Education Recovery Act, Cong. Res. H.R 2863-113 (2005), 266.

through the end of the year, providing everything from bottled water to backpacks, from pencils to prom dresses.¹⁶⁰

In addition, the Mississippi School Boards Association (MSBA) established the Mississippi Hurricane Katrina School Relief Fund (KSRF). The fund was designed to help schools get the emergency relief needed to become operational, assist displaced school employees and their families, return children affected by Hurricane Katrina to their normal routines as soon as possible and assure that displaced children did not have to drop out of school due to the financial hardship.¹⁶¹

Cisco Systems made a \$40 million commitment in a multi-phase, three-year education initiative in the Gulf Coast region to aid in post Hurricane Katrina rebuilding activities. The Cisco 21st Century Schools (21S) 21S initiative was a blueprint for reconstructing and improving schools that began in Mississippi and has been replicated around the country, including schools in New York and New Jersey impacted by Hurricane Sandy.¹⁶² Cisco brought together a coalition of public, private, and non-profit organizations that provided a holistic approach to building a twenty-first century educational program, which greatly benefitted the Gulf Coast students.

Dr. Bounds began a campaign to enlist other corporations to invest in Mississippi's school children. For example, BellSouth donated \$2.5 million to provide virtual courses to affected students, train teachers in online course delivery, and provide support for schools and learning centers to accommodate student needs. Also, Chevron launched the Energy for Learning Initiative, an \$18 million program to support public school education in 23 Louisiana and Mississippi school districts affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Additionally, Chevron pledged \$8 million to aid short-term relief and reconstruction. Best Buy Co. donated \$8 million in a relief package to help K–12 schools damaged or destroyed by Katrina. Furthermore, Best Buy launched a special te@ch emergency response program with contributions of \$3 million in October for K-12

¹⁶⁰ Hank M. Bounds, *Report on Mississippi's Schools for the Governor's Commission on Recovery, Rebuilding and Renewal* (Jackson: Mississippi Department of Education, 2007), 3.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹⁶² Bounds, *Mississippi Department of Education Report*, 6.

schools with increased enrollment of students displaced by the hurricanes. The teach program awarded Best Buy gift cards to schools that were applied toward improving the classroom experience during the year for all students. Gift cards were awarded in amounts up to \$5,000 per school.¹⁶³

The speed at which school districts reopened is testament to the dedication and commitment of Barbour's cabinet and educators throughout the state and nation. It would have been understandable if test scores had suffered in the aftermath of the storm and the disruption it caused. After all, students, teachers, and administrators were living in cramped FEMA trailers, the conditions on the coast were not conducive to learning and the future of the coast was uncertain in the first two years of rebuilding. Despite these adversities, the results of the state tests administered in the spring of 2006 revealed that the students had not just held their own during the year of Katrina, they had excelled.¹⁶⁴

Of the 122 schools in the 16 school districts in the six southernmost counties, 63 were rated Level 5, Superior-Performing under the Mississippi Accountability System, which ranks schools from Level 1, Low-Performing to Level 5, Superior-Performing. Additionally, 39 schools were rated Level 4, Exemplary and 30 schools were rated Level 3, Successful. None of the schools was rated Level 1 or Level 2, Under-Performing.¹⁶⁵

4. Rebuilding

Seven days after Katrina's landfall, Governor Barbour established the Governor's Commission on Recovery, Rebuilding, and Renewal (the Commission) and selected Mississippian and former Netscape CEO Jim Barksdale as its chairman. The governor's directive to the commission was threefold: solicit the best ideas for recovery, rebuilding and renewal from both public and private sectors; develop a broad vision for a better Gulf Coast and southern Mississippi; and involve local citizens and elected officials in the process of developing and endorsing these ideas.¹⁶⁶ Specifically, the governor asked the

¹⁶³ Ibid., 7.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 10.

¹⁶⁵ Bounds, *Report on Mississippi's School*, 17.

¹⁶⁶ Diane Dorney, *Mississippi Renewal Forum Summary Report* (Gaithersburg, MS: Town Paper, 2005), 3.

commission to provide local leaders with ideas and tools to help them envision what their region could look like five, 10, 20, and 30 years from now and to recommend strategies and tools for achieving these goals.

With this guidance, the commission solicited input from experts and industry-leaders in housing, planning, and other areas. Additionally, and most importantly, the commission sought advice and input from the citizens of the affected counties. Issue committees, comprised of local stakeholders from both the public and private sector, were formed to evaluate challenges and identify opportunities within specific sectors such as infrastructure, finance, agriculture, tourism, education, health and human services, and governmental and nongovernmental organizations. Over 50 town hall meetings across 33 counties were held to receive ideas and opinions on the long-term recovery and renewal of south Mississippi. The commission stressed that while the process of identifying problems and recommending solutions was important, implementation and accountability should also be addressed, especially in light of the failure to institute many of the recommendations after Hurricane Camille. Secondly, the commission was guided by Governor Barbour's insistence that local governments and citizens would control their own destiny in rebuilding their communities.

After thousands of hours of input from committees and intensive research, the Commission submitted its final report to Governor Barbour on December 31, 2005. The report, *After Katrina: Building Back Better than Ever*,¹⁶⁷ offered over 240 specific recommendations. The recommendations fell into four broad categories:

- Infrastructure, including land use, transportation, public services, and housing
- Economic development, including tourism, small businesses, agriculture, forestry, marine resources, and defense and government contracting
- Human services, including education, health and human services and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)
- Other special considerations, including finance, long-term policy recommendations and a roadmap to greater accountability

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 8.

With the Commission focused on the rebuilding efforts for the coast, Barbour began working the halls of Congress for the funding to restore the coast to a better, more viable place to live than before the storm. Of his trips to Washington, DC, he explains:

I went to Washington 17 times between the storm and Christmas to get the law passed that was the Special Disaster Assistance. Senator Cochran deserves more credit for it than anybody. We continued to have a good relationship with FEMA, we had a good relationship with HUD. HUD wouldn't normally matter in a disaster, but in Senator Cochran's special disaster assistance package that was passed in December of 2005, a lot of the money was funneled through HUD because they have a program called Community Development Block Grant and it was the program that we determined, working with Cochran's office, gave the state maximum flexibility. That was one of the very serious considerations; we didn't want Washington telling us how to spend the money.

The governor's recovery plan was largely funded by Congress. The appropriations package passed in December 2005, Public Law 109-148, allocated over \$10 billion in recovery funds that became the foundation on which the state based its recovery efforts. The legislation provided help for housing, medical centers, schools and colleges, highways and bridges, employment, law enforcement, human services, coastal restoration, and other important needs.¹⁶⁸ Subsequent legislation added more funding and changed program requirements to tailor to Katrina needs. In the November 2005 plan, Mississippi requested funding through the agencies, which matched the mission of the projects. For example, \$600 million was requested for water and wastewater infrastructure through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of Agriculture (USDA); \$500 million for the Port of Gulfport restoration was requested through the Department of Transportation; \$300 million was requested for economic development through the Department of Commerce and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grants (CDBG); and \$150 million was requested for community facilities repairs through USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Grants.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁸ *Five Years After Katrina: Progress Report on Recovery, Rebuilding and Renewal*, report (Jackson: Office of Governor Haley Barbour, 2010), 12.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

Instead of spreading funding over multiple agencies and creating new programs, Congress, led by Senator Thad Cochran, chose to direct funding for many of Mississippi's requests through the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) Program. This option allowed maximum program flexibility and reduced existing bureaucratic structures in each state to manage CDBG funds. To ensure maximum flexibility for Mississippi to implement its priorities for a comprehensive recovery, Congress included specific language requiring the HUD secretary to waive normal CDBG requirements where necessary, with the exception of requirements related to fair housing, labor standards and the environment. In addition, Congress allocated \$5.4 billion to Mississippi, which used the funding for housing, infrastructure and economic development needs as identified within the Governor's Comprehensive Recovery Plan.¹⁷⁰ The Barbour administration worked closely with the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) and HUD to ensure that these funds were used to spur housing, infrastructure and economic development recovery. In addition to the \$5.4 billion in discretionary funding, the CDBG also delivered over \$2 billion directly to homeowners. To further ensure that the funds were properly allocated and spent, Barbour asked for and received \$5million to hire fraud investigators to investigate homeowners, building contractors and debris removal contractors.¹⁷¹

The immediate source of funding that flowed from FEMA to the state came from the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. Generally, all Stafford Act programs require a cost-share from the state, local governments, or other non-federal sources. Typically, a state and the entities within a state must pay for 25 percent of costs, and that amount may be reduced to 10 percent following a major disaster. Recognizing the severe impact of Katrina on the Gulf Coast region and the enormous cost burden of cost-share for Stafford Act recovery programs, Barbour and Senator Cochran petitioned Congress to waive the cost share for all states impacted by

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 15.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 17.

Katrina. As a result, in 2007 Congress waived the non-federal match requirement for all Stafford Act programs. Stafford Act funding for Mississippi totaled \$11.9 billion.¹⁷²

Governor Barbour was instrumental in the Mississippi Department of Employment Services (MDES) acquiring a \$95 million National Emergency Grant (NEG) to aid in the recovery efforts on reemployment and job training. NEG programs focused on temporary job placement and support and long-term goals of job training, filling workforce needs in the manufacturing, shipbuilding, health care, supportive services, construction, information technology, and hospitality services sectors. MDES administered several programs NEG programs including; Temporary Recovery Jobs, Training Programs, Supportive Services and the Working your Way Back Home Program.¹⁷³

The Temporary Recovery Jobs Program provided temporary employment through public sector and non-profit employers to more than 2,500 individuals. Participants were eligible to be employed for up to 18 months or paid up to \$36,000. Many of these temporary jobs led to permanent employment. The training program provided funds for on-the-job training, classroom-based training, or private training. More than 6,500 residents took advantage of this job-enhancing program. Supportive Services provided support payments to individuals enrolled in training. These supplemental payments paid for services such as day care, transportation costs, and school supplies. Over 1,300 workers enrolled in this program.¹⁷⁴ Another program, the Working Your Way Back Home Program helped Mississippians who evacuated 151 miles or more from home get the assistance they needed to find a job. Eligible costs included reimbursement for travel and relocation expenses. More than 1,500 residents participated in this program.¹⁷⁵ Finally, the Pathways to Construction Training provided training through area community and junior colleges to meet construction industry needs, which grew

¹⁷² Ibid., 27.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 56.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 54.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 58.

significantly as Mississippi rebuilt after Katrina. More than 6,000 construction workers received training through this program.¹⁷⁶

Casino revenues on the Mississippi Gulf Coast in 2004 totaled nearly \$1.23 billion, the highest revenues since casino gambling came to the coast in the early 1990s.¹⁷⁷ By 2005, the region's casinos were pumping nearly \$500,000 in tax revenue to the state treasury daily. After the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, the casinos generated no income for September, October and November, causing their profits to plummet to \$886 million for the year.¹⁷⁸

The gaming industry in Mississippi was at a cross roads. Rebuilding the casinos on barges exposed them to future risk of destruction by another storm. Across the industry and investment firms, there was a real concern about rebuilding the gaming industry in an area susceptible to hurricanes. In late September, Governor Barbour called a special legislative session to discuss the rebuilding efforts for the state. In his opening statement to lawmakers on the session's first day on September 27, Barbour urged legislators to change the gaming laws in order to rebuild the industry:

First, of all of you who have been there, you've seen the catastrophic destruction of the casinos and the destruction wrought by those behemoths when they crashed into buildings and vehicles. We can't return the casinos to the way they were. It would be irresponsible.

How about putting them up on stilts, but still over the water? That would be better than it was, but it would greatly limit rebuilding and, in my opinion, result in a return to the old status quo.

If we want to see much better quality development by the casino companies; if we want world-class resorts that will be about much more than just gaming, if we want to rebuild the Coast bigger and better than ever; I believe we will fail if we don't allow the casino to come on shore, even if only a few hundred feet.

Making the casinos sit over the water on stilts will not stimulate the investment we want. A small adjustment of a few hundred feet, but

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Patton, "Resorting to Casinos," 470.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 471.

consistent with the original law of being tied to the water, is the best chance, not only for getting the thousands of employees back to work sooner, but to have even more employees later and make our Coast a world-class destination resort.

Many will see the vote on shore-based gaming as the first defining vote of where Mississippi is headed. Will it be business as usual; the same old same old? Or are we going to lift our horizons and take advantage of this opportunity to have something better.¹⁷⁹

Lawmakers approved the measure to bring the casinos onshore, and Barbour signed it into law on October 17, 2005. The new law allowed casino operators to build on land as long as the new casinos were within 800 feet of the waterfront.¹⁸⁰

With the ability to now build casinos on-shore, the casino industry began rebuilding rapidly. By 2008, there were 11 casinos operating on the coast. Prior to Katrina, there were 12 properties. Slot machines and table games were at approximately 85 percent of the pre-Katrina levels.¹⁸¹ However, revenues were up considerably from their pre-Katrina levels. For 2007 and 2008, Gulf Coast casino revenues posted records, coming in at \$1.3 billion and \$1.26 billion respectively.¹⁸² In addition, the gaming industry in 2008 employed over 17,000 workers along the coast, which rivaled the employment numbers before Katrina struck.¹⁸³

The Port of Gulfport was the third largest Container Port in the Gulf of Mexico prior to Katrina.¹⁸⁴ However, it was only able to accommodate small ships due to the depth of the channel and the lack of large materiel handling cranes. Katrina's surge destroyed the port and the containers on the port caused extensive damage to buildings inland as the surge swept them up to a mile from the port. To restore the port facilities, as well as address the damage in the surrounding community from surge-displaced

¹⁷⁹ Haley R. Barbour, "Katrina Special-Session Speech" (speech, 2005 Mississippi Special Legislative Session, State Capitol, Jackson, MS, September 27, 2005).

¹⁸⁰ Mississippi Code of 1972 Unannotated, § Chapter 76 Mississippi Gaming Control Act (1976).

¹⁸¹ Patton, "Resorting to Casinos," 471.

¹⁸² Mississippi Gulf Coast Business Council, *Mississippi Gulf Coast 3.0*.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Miller, "Institutional Legacy as the Driver of Port Development Strategy," 4.

containers, \$570 million in CDBG was allocated to the Mississippi State Port Authority at Gulfport.¹⁸⁵ The funds were allocated for restoration of public infrastructure and publicly owned facilities that were damaged or destroyed during Katrina and to better protect the surrounding community during future storms.¹⁸⁶

Governor Barbour received a great deal of criticism for dedicating over \$570 million to the port. He was accused of diverting funding for low-income housing and other initiatives to help the poor; however, Governor Barbour was able to see the long-term effects of a new port that benefited the coast, the state, and the entire region. Barbour's vision on the port restoration:

A question arose: Should we rebuild the Port as a sleepy banana port like it has been for 50 years, or was this the time to try to compete with New Orleans? We actually had more container traffic than New Orleans had before the storm. We thought we could have a whole lot more container traffic because New Orleans is a day up the river, a day down the river. It's more expensive for the shipping companies. Mobile was making improvements, and they have made improvements. They have an advantage in that they have a deeper channel than we've got. So it was clear to me that we were going to get resources that we could use to get the Port to where it could be the biggest container port on the Gulf. Why? It's closest to Chicago. The shortest route from a port on the Gulf of Mexico to Chicago, Illinois, which is the biggest city in the Midwest, is to go out of the Port of Gulfport on Kansas City Southern, hit the Canadian National near Hattiesburg and go straight to Chicago via Jackson. And we confirmed that with shipping companies and the railroad. The problem is the railroad from Hattiesburg south, Kansas City Southern, was not modern; trains could only go ten miles an hour and containers could not double stack. So we got the government to give us a grant and then we took some state money and the Kansas City Southern put up their money and we were way down the road of making the Kansas City Southern where you could go 59 miles an hour, double stacked, that is, be able to stack two containers on one car. But the big issue we had other than rebuilding and how to rebuild it, was the channel. The channel's only 36 feet deep. The Panama Canal is about to be a much, much bigger canal and it's going to take much bigger ships, called post-Panamax ships. And we can't take those. Mobile can't take those. Houston can, Tampa can. But Houston and Tampa both have very constrained capacity, just because they've run out of land. If you go up the east Coast, Miami and

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 6.

¹⁸⁶ Office of Governor Haley Barbour, *Five Years after Katrina*, 41.

Jacksonville have spent \$400 million of state money to deepen their channels so they can take these ships. Savannah and Charleston are both in the process. We're not going to get post-Panamax ships, but these post-Panamax will come through the Canal and then they will hand off cargoes to smaller ships, but ships far larger than the ones we take at Gulfport. And the idea was to try and get in the market for those ships. A study had been underway before Katrina to deepen the channel but that study was interrupted by Katrina. So that was our plan. We'll get 42 or 45 feet of channel depth; then we'll be able to take in bigger ships, but now we've got to have the port itself where it can take bigger ships.

The other major consideration was FEMA said, 'You're supposed to be using the federal money to protect the public.' And one of the real issues in Katrina was the storm surge went across the Port, picked up all these containers and bounced them off office buildings, cars, trucks and churches -- and containers were swept way into Long Beach. When a hurricane comes out of the Gulf, of Mexico, its winds are actually turning counterclockwise and so when it hits land, it doesn't knock stuff north, generally; it knocks stuff northwest. It's like a right cross. And so FEMA said, 'What are you doing to keep that from happening again?' And one of the things we said is, 'We're going to elevate the Port. We're going to elevate the port to an elevation that FEMA says is high enough to prevent this from happening again'. That turned out to be 25 feet. FEMA approved that elevation. That meant we would re-build the Port and when the ships would come in, we would have cranes up on that 25 feet pier and they would reach out to the ships. It solves one of the problems about having bigger ships, but it also achieves the first goal for which the government gave us that money: to protect the public, the public's lives and the public's property. We would be making a real mistake to let Gulfport stay the same kind of port that it was. We wanted to change the port from a banana port to a port that could service the entire region all the way to Chicago.¹⁸⁷

Twelve contracts for engineering, design, and environmental services were awarded to companies through several rounds of competitive procurement. In addition to these contracts, the port's 60-acre West Pier fill project elevated the West Pier facilities to 25 feet above sea level, which was more than twice the pre-Katrina elevation and about three feet above Katrina surge levels.¹⁸⁸ Raising the elevation helped provide the port, its tenants, and the community with enhanced protection against future storm surges.

¹⁸⁷ Haley Barbour, interview with author, August 7, 2014.

¹⁸⁸ Miller, "Institutional Legacy as the Driver of Port Development Strategy," 5.

The port is a major driver of both jobs and business activity and is vital part of the comprehensive recovery of the Gulf Coast. The state's intent in rebuilding this facility was not solely to rebuild the facility in a way that better protected the port and Gulfport area but also working to build a "Port of the Future" to improve future shipping and growth trends. Thousands of jobs were directly or indirectly related to the project. This restoration program was important to recapturing a major portion of the region's job base and in filling a national need for more port capacity. With the expected completion of the Panama Canal expansion in 2015, ports in the Gulf and southeast must increase their operations to handle the nation's imports and exports. Restoration helped ensure the port could service increased traffic resulting from improvements to the Panama Canal.¹⁸⁹

Hurricane Katrina's winds knocked out the majority of cellular phone towers on the coast. Towers that were not destroyed were rendered inoperable due to lack of electricity or emergency power generation. Main switched for landline phones were destroyed or inundated by the storm surge. For the first week of response operations, responders were limited to radios with a range of one to two miles. Communications into and out of the impacted area were limited to satellite phones, of which there were few. In early September, Nextel Communications, and Southern Linc push-to-talk phones were provided in great numbers by the two companies; this greatly enhanced communications.¹⁹⁰

The lack of an interoperable communications system severely impeded command and control, situational awareness and limited federal, state and local officials' ability to address unsubstantiated and inaccurate media reports.¹⁹¹ After Katrina, Governor Barbour was committed to building a statewide, interoperable radio system that would withstand a hurricane or earthquake, as Northwest Mississippi is in the New Madrid Seismic Zone. In addition, Governor Barbour utilized \$280 million in hazard mitigation grant money from FEMA to build the system. He had to overcome several obstacles imposed by FEMA on using mitigation funds for a communications system. However, he

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 4.

¹⁹⁰ *A Failure of Initiative: Final Report*, 165.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 163.

was able to convince Senator Cochran to re-allocate disaster funds for an interoperable communications system.

Governor Barbour's assessment of Mississippi Wireless Integrated Network (MSWIN):

I said that your boss, Harold Cross at the time of Katrina, that he might have well have been a Civil War general. That he could not know what was going on in Jackson County without sending somebody over there. I told him he could at least send them in a helicopter, he didn't have to send them on a horse anymore, but it's the same principle. But we couldn't communicate consistently because the cell phone towers were down.

I testified before the U.S. Senate that the number one thing that the federal government could do for us in the mega disaster was to give us survivable, interoperable communications among federal, state and local agencies that are involved in disasters, whether it's the military, whether it's the emergency management people, whether it's the fire department, police department, the—the ambulance service, the EMTs—and everybody agreed. So we got a very substantial amount of money from the federal government and one significant part of it is for what is called 'hazard mitigation' to try to reduce the chance of future hazards and disasters, or to reduce the damage that done by future disasters. Well there is nothing better for mitigating risks than communications. So we wanted to spend part of that money to build a survivable, interoperable system that is now called MSWIN, Mississippi Wireless Integrated Network.

I think it's the first in the lower 48. I'm proud of it.¹⁹²

In 2007, the Mississippi Wireless Integrated Network (MSWIN) was established. Work on the system began in the southern portion of the state, and by 2010 the southern third of the state had coverage. The first real test of the network came during the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill in the summer of 2010. The system performed superlatively and linked local, state, and federal entities together. MSWIN consists of over 140 tower sites that transmit and receive 700 MHz radio communications along with 6.7 GHz microwave connections to nearby towers to backhaul the communication to the closest switch. In 2011, Mississippi had a 97 percent coverage rate.¹⁹³ MSWIN radios are P-25

¹⁹² Haley Barbour, interview with author, August 7, 2014.

¹⁹³ Office of the Governor, Mississippi Wireless Communications Commission, "MSWIN Covers 97% of Mississippi," news release, Jackson, 2011, <http://www.wcc.ms.gov/Pages/MSWIN.aspx>

compliant systems, meaning that they are in accordance with the strictest federal requirements for interoperable communications required after 9/11. There are over 40,000 MSWIN system users, and the system can accommodate over 100,000 daily users.¹⁹⁴ These users vary from public safety, governmental executive and administrative personnel to road maintenance crews. In addition to routine communications, users also depend on the network during life threatening conditions and emergencies.

F. CONCLUSION

Hurricane Katrina was the costliest disaster to ever strike the United States. Tragically, 238 Mississippians perished in the storm. Mistakes were made at every level of government. Mississippi is still recovering from the storm, and the recovery will go on for many more years. However, the recovery and rebuilding in the state has been a systematic, organized, and deliberate process. The population did not leave, the schools and homes were rebuilt, and the economy is vibrant. Major manufacturing firms stayed, and many more have moved operations to the coast. Governor Barbour led the state through the response, recovery, and rebuilding phases. He empowered his team to make decisions independently and constantly encouraged them to not be satisfied with the status quo. He provided strategic guidance and focused his efforts on getting the federal assistance the state needed and deserved. He explains:

I'll just close by saying this and I believe this sincerely, I've said it in a trillion of speeches. You know, our people bore the brunt of the worst national disaster in American history, and they got knocked down flat because of the utter obliteration. But they did get right back up, hitched up their britches and went to work, and they went to work; not just helping themselves, but helping their neighbors. I believe Katrina and Mississippians' reaction to Katrina did more to improve the image of Mississippi than anything's that's happened in my lifetime, and I'm 66 years old. People looked down here and said, 'I like what those people are doing. They're trying. They're not looking for a handout. Those are strong, resilient, self-reliant people and I like them.' And I will tell you: More than one time when we were recruiting industries to Mississippi, I would have the CEO say, 'After Katrina, I said to my staff those are the kind of people we'd like to have working for us.' And I think that's—that is the legacy of Katrina, and that is my, to the degree I have a legacy as

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

Governor, it is colored almost entirely by Katrina; just because that event was such—so unprecedented it—and it’s—the recovery is still going on.¹⁹⁵

For his leadership during Katrina response and recovery, Governor Barbour was awarded the Thomas Jefferson Freedom Award in 2006, which is an award presented to a nationally recognized leader by the bipartisan American Legislative Exchange Council. In addition, he was also named Governor of the Year for 2006 by Washington, DC-based *Governing* magazine. He was also awarded the Gulf Guardian Award by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for his work to rebuild and protect sensitive coastal ecosystems. Additionally, in 2008, Governor Barbour received the Adam Smith Medal from Business-Industry Political Action Committee for his pursuit of the principles of free enterprise.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ “Haley Barbour, interview with author, August 7, 2014.

¹⁹⁶ Greenblatt, “Steady in a Storm.”

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V. CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

Through interviews and studies of various leaders, Marcus et al. developed the theory of meta-leadership, which purports to be a highly effective leadership style in today's complex and fluid decision-making landscape.¹⁹⁷ Their theory describes the ideal leadership traits that produce optimum success during complex, catastrophic events. This chapter will examine Governor Barbour's decisions through the lens of meta-leadership qualities to determine if the theory is applicable to Katrina response operations under Governor Barbour's leadership in Mississippi.

By design, meta-leadership concept and practice themes address the complexities of generating a unity of action when many people, organizational units, and competing priorities are focused into a broadly adopted strategy, plan, or mission.¹⁹⁸ In concept, it is a question of linking problem to solution: what personal and contextual factors affect what meta-leaders see, perceive, decide, and ultimately act upon? In practice, it is a puzzle of optimally engaging three facets—up, down, and across—of organizational connectivity. Who are the many people that must be influenced and how can they best be leveraged to prompt forward motion? The meta-leadership model focuses attention and helps categorize the scope of people, factors, and considerations that are in the elements of this integrated enterprise.¹⁹⁹

Meta-leaders possess a robust array of qualities that they employ to effectively assess, manage, and solve problems that occur in day-to-day practices as well as in catastrophic events. It is necessary for successful meta-leaders to use all five dimensions to be most effective. In examining Governor Barbour's leadership during and after Hurricane Katrina, all five dimensions influenced the actions he took in leading the response and recovery for Mississippi.

¹⁹⁷ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, "The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership," 2.

¹⁹⁸ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, "Meta-Leadership and National Emergency Preparedness," 131.

¹⁹⁹ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, "The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership," 5.

A. THE PERSON OF THE META-LEADER

Personality, experience, culture, emotional expression, and character are significant factors in the conduct and impact of meta-leaders.²⁰⁰ In addition, meta-leaders also possess emotional intelligence.²⁰¹ People who direct large scale or complex initiatives must convey these attributes: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Because they are watched and challenged by audiences beyond their usual social and professional circles, meta-leaders must be comfortable in their own surroundings, in the milieu of others. Furthermore, they must have the talent to make other people feel comfortable and assured. The self-discipline, drive, understanding, and capacity to form meaningful and satisfying relationships are critical in meta-leaders efforts to cross the usual divides and boundaries of organizational, professional and cultural association.²⁰²

Meta-leaders are able to look at problems in a holistic way and use their influence in a multifaceted response to arrive at a successful outcome. In addition, meta-leaders have the experience and maturity to identify gaps between the problem and the response to it. Moreover, they must inspire the connectivity of action and confidence of purpose under even the most trying of circumstances. This aptitude for the strategic direction and capacity to influence beyond their immediate domain epitomizes the unique contributions of meta-leaders.

Governor Barbour's experiences leading up to Hurricane Katrina, from high school student body president to Chair of the Republican National Committee (RNC) to becoming a successful lobbyist, provided him with a wealth of experience from which to draw when making decisions for the Mississippi response and recovery to Hurricane Katrina. Knowing he was capable of "getting things done" afforded Barbour the self-confidence to make decisions that were sometimes unpopular. With a strategic plan for

²⁰⁰ Kirschenbaum, *Chaos Organization and Disaster Management*, 27.

²⁰¹ Burns, *Leadership*, 17.

²⁰² Daniel Goleman, *Working with Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1998), 77.

the future and the goal for recovery always in mind, he was able to effectively direct every facet of the effort at the strategic level.

Additionally, Governor Barbour fully understood that he must take charge. Early in the response, Barbour made it a priority to establish the chain of command. It was structured in such a way that empowered local leaders to actively direct the response effort of their areas. Barbour recognized that his talents lay not in running the daily, tactical operations associated with the storm response, but rather at the strategic level working with federal officials to acquire the necessary resources, namely funding. In addition, he took many risks, especially in the first few days after the storm. He also strongly urged both volunteers and responders not already in the impacted region *not* to deploy until the search and rescue was completed and the roads were cleared. He knew that this was a prudent action, but he also realized that he could have been criticized by the media and general public if responders had in fact needed more assets. Furthermore, Barbour accelerated the reestablishment of a local workforce by deciding to refuse an extension for unemployment funds for residents. While Ingalls Shipyard and other businesses were operational and there were employment opportunities for coastal residents, people were choosing not to work and received unemployment benefits. This strategy, while seemingly harsh, actually encouraged productivity.

Barbour knew what Mississippians feared most concerning hurricanes: another storm as destructive as Hurricane Camille in 1969. He was able to leverage that fear to persuade the coastal population to evacuate by convincing the media to compare the two storms. He also knew that self-preparation was essential and convinced both his cabinet and the public to be prepared.

Throughout the response, Barbour embodied the person of the meta-leader. The meta-leader has the experience and maturity to identify gaps between the problem and the response to it and then to inspire the connectivity of action and confidence of purpose under even the most trying of circumstances. This aptitude for the strategic direction and capacity to influence beyond his immediate domain epitomizes the unique contributions

of the meta-leader. Barbour's personality, character, emotional intelligence and self-discipline closely mirror a meta-leader as described by Marcus et al.²⁰³

B. THE SITUATION

The greater the complexity the more difficult it is to develop a factual, evidence-based clear, and actionable description of what is occurring.²⁰⁴ To understand the complexities of the situation is to grasp the disparities between what one believes to be true and the actual truth.²⁰⁵ Situational awareness and the ability to identify and thus close gaps in information are key traits of the meta-leader. In a complex situation, the many stakeholders involved naturally have their own analysis and interpretation of the "objective problem" in accordance with their distinct interests, concerns, and purposes.²⁰⁶

Meta-leaders cannot suffer from "paralysis by analysis." A quick assessment that is mostly accurate is better than a slow, thorough one that comes too late to make a difference.²⁰⁷ Because of this, meta-leaders also calculate the upsides of those decisions and actions, again understanding that "success" will be measured differently by each stakeholder who is affected.²⁰⁸

In a complex, catastrophic event, a decision maker's primary challenge is to develop a clear picture of what is happening as a whole. The decision maker must discern the most accurate data in the midst of an ocean of information in a constantly changing environment. Using sense-making and the development of "connectivity between disparate views," leaders with situational awareness can direct response-team members to a meaningful and productive course of action.

²⁰³ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, "The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership," 9.

²⁰⁴ Bransford, and Stein, *The Ideal Problem Solver*, 32.

²⁰⁵ Marques, "Awakened Leadership in Action," 813.

²⁰⁶ Nicholls, "Meta Leadership in Organisations," 18.

²⁰⁷ Weick, *Making Sense of the Organization*, 53.

²⁰⁸ Nicholls, "Meta Leadership in Organisations," 19.

As soon as he was first notified of the imminent landfall of Hurricane Katrina, Governor Barbour made decisions that affected Mississippians before, during and after the storm. He drew upon historical knowledge of past hurricanes and relied upon the expertise of subject matter experts to advise him on the best plan for surviving the storm.

Barbour knew what Mississippians feared most concerning hurricanes: another storm as destructive as Hurricane Camille in 1969. He was able to leverage that fear to persuade the coastal population to evacuate by convincing the media to compare the two storms. By leveraging his personal relationship with U.S. Senator Trent Lott, a homeowner in Pascagoula, to prepare his home for the impending storm, Barbour was able to impress upon coastal residents the importance of taking ownership for their safety. He knew that self-preparation was essential and convinced both his cabinet and the public to be prepared.

In addition, Barbour knew that the people needed to know the truth in a clear, fully transparent manner. His press conferences, press releases, and speeches left nothing to the imagination as far as the damage to the southern portion of the state. In his presentations, he was adamant that this was a Mississippi disaster that would be solved by Mississippians.

Barbour was adept at considering and using all assets available to address problems that arose. Hurricane Katrina effectively rendered all roads impassable and therefore isolating survivors from relief efforts. Barbour leveraged the assets he had in the National Guard to fly helicopters to remote areas to identify and assist stranded residents. This was never in the hurricane plan, but it was an operation that ultimately saved lives.

By discerning the key elements needed to reestablish the destroyed communities, he worked to develop the simple but effective recovery plan of rebuilding schools, jobs, and infrastructure. Barbour understood that coastal residents, if given the opportunity to re-locate to other states, would not be inclined to return to the coast if too much time passed. Additionally, he knew that once children were settled into new routines at new schools, families would become comfortable in new homes and when the bread winners

established new relationships with new employers, the chances of returning to the coast were slim. For these reasons, Barbour focused much of his time and energy in getting businesses opened, the schools rebuilt, and establishing temporary housing. Barbour knew what was needed to keep residents on the coast, and he was largely successful in building the infrastructure to keep them. By 2008, net job losses were only 3,000 and the coastal population was only 12,000 less than before the storm.²⁰⁹ According to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau census, the three coastal counties had a population growth of 2.4 percent over the 2000 census.²¹⁰ The ability to get all affected schools open before the beginning of November 2005 was an unprecedented accomplishment. Barbour's understanding of the value of getting coastal children back in school in order to keep their parents on the coast and contributing to the economy and recovery was one of his the single greatest accomplishments. Barbour knew that the second order effect of not getting schools opened was the large-scale abandonment of the coast by the middle class.

Barbour's relationship with business owners and his sense of urgency in getting factories, offices and retail stores opened were critical. He needed to get people back to work but also needed to begin creating a tax base for the cities and counties.

Barbour related the three times in the state's history that a catastrophic event had occurred: the Civil War, the Flood of 1927, and Hurricane Camille. He knew that the state had suffered for many years after each of those events because of the lack of vision in how to rebuild. Moreover, Barbour understood the opportunity Katrina provided to rebuild the way the residents wanted the coast rebuilt. Additionally, Barbour formulated a plan and articulated that plan to his cabinet and to the people; Barbour did not wait until the full scope of the destruction was known. He took the basic information and immediately began formulating his concept for recovery and rebuilding.

There is little doubt that the actions taken by Barbour in the immediate aftermath of the storm and his decisions for the months following represented a complete understanding of the situation and the opportunities to make the coast a better place than

²⁰⁹ Mississippi Gulf Coast Business Council, *Mississippi Gulf Coast 3.0*.

²¹⁰ United States Census Bureau, "State and Country Quick Facts," July 8, 2014, accessed November 17, 2014, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html>

before the storm. Marcus et al.'s description²¹¹ of understanding the situation by a meta-leader correlates precisely with Governor Barbour's decisions and actions in the aftermath of Katrina.

C. LEAD THE SILO

In complex environments involving multiple organizations, departments, and units operating in overlapping domains, leaders who arise as meta-leaders rarely operate independently. They have their own organizational base of operations within which followers see them in charge.²¹² It is imperative that, in order to get people outside of the organization to follow meta-leaders, their own people must support them as leaders who are looking out for their organization's best interests as well as the totality of the situation. For meta-leaders, the support of their constituents is essential to achieving influence within the larger system.

Leadership does not reside with one person. In robust organizations, it is embedded among many people and at multiple levels of the hierarchy.²¹³ Effective leadership is a continuous learning process. Therefore, meta-leaders must constantly encourage subordinates to learn, grow, and have vision. These goals must continuously be modified as the situation dictates. Meta-leaders understand the way relations at the highest levels affect operations at the lowest level. They use this understanding in a positive, proactive manner to enhance morale and shared purpose throughout the organization.²¹⁴

Governor Barbour fostered an environment of teamwork in each of his endeavors. His cabinet, local, and county officials and the Mississippi Legislature all became part of a unified team with common goals. Barbour had been governor of Mississippi for over two years prior to Hurricane Katrina. He had established himself as the leader of the state of Mississippi early in his term and ensured all who worked for him knew that he was in

²¹¹ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, "The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership," 17.

²¹² Ibid., 12.

²¹³ Giuliani, and Kurson, *Leadership*, 56.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

charge. In addition, he fostered a productive work environment for his staff and state agencies, believing people should do their job and if a problem arose, it could be fixed. This environment enabled key staff members and state agency chiefs to be confident in being a part of the solution process when decisions were made in the response and recovery of Mississippi after Katrina. His guidance to his cabinet in the early days of his administration was “If you think you know what to do, do it. Don’t come ask me when you think you know what to do. If you think you know what to do, do it. And if you screw up, we’ll clean up.”²¹⁵ Governor Barbour believed in delegating both responsibility and authority. Furthermore, he led his administration by providing vision and guidance and then allowing his subordinates to develop strategies within their organizations.

The Governor’s Commission on Recovery, Rebuilding, and Renewal was the perfect vehicle to develop and implement the plan to bring the coast back from utter destruction. The Commission formed for rebuilding was the ideal entity to ensure that all followers had a voice and the opportunity to express their desires for recovery and rebuilding. By forming the Commission and appointing Jim Barksdale, the former CEO of Netscape, as the director, Barbour successfully brought together disparate entities into a single, unified body in which to collaborate on rebuilding the coast. His decision to implement a Unified Command Post with MEMA and FEMA also ensured that there was a shared purpose in the emergency management community.

The devastation from Katrina was so severe that key leaders had no idea where or how to begin the response. They understood the gravity of the situation, but what they needed was a meta-leader to step in and provide guidance, or at least a starting point. Barbour’s guidance to key leaders provided the spark to take action. Furthermore, he provided the kind of direction that unified the effort. The relationships developed by Barbour were both horizontal and vertical. Barbour instilled his vision of what the coast could become and his constituents and cabinet members easily adopted this vision and developed their strategies accordingly. True meta-leaders foster innovative thinking that

²¹⁵ Haley Barbour, interview with author, August 7, 2014.

expounds upon the leaders' vision. This leadership trait was prevalent in Barbour's guidance throughout the response.

D. LEAD UP

Great meta-leaders are great subordinates. They are dependable, honest, reliable, and loyal. In addition, they validate the power and command equation and respect and serve the objectives of those in charge. In this way, meta-leaders craft vertical connectivity and foster two-way feedback. Influence is shaped by informing and educating the boss, and the ability to effectively influence the boss is an important element of wider leadership within the system. In government, as well as in corporate settings, subject matter experts often report to elected or appointed authorities who are responsible for policy direction and strategic decision making. While subordinates may not know more than their boss, they often have a perspective on the work at hand that their boss does not. Because they are in closer proximity to that work, subordinates have a better sense for both real problems on the ground as well as solutions to address them. This perspective and functional interdependence could be a valuable asset to the boss, though much depends on how the information is delivered and how it is received.²¹⁶ In a successful boss-subordinate relationship, meta-leaders are able to fashion wide influence throughout the system by virtue of the support and opportunities the boss is able to open.

As an elected governor, the people of Mississippi were first and foremost Barbour's "boss." Despite short-term pressure for immediate actions, Barbour hinged his rebuilding plan on enhancing the future quality of life of those impacted by the storm. Barbour realized that many of his initiatives should be long-term, often at the expense of short-term, instant gratification projects. He was criticized for allocating over \$570 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to the Port of Gulfport; however, Barbour knew that the future of the port was in expanding its capacity and raising the port's elevation to 25 feet above sea level. The long-term growth from the port expansion would bring in more jobs and commerce than any other initiative. The second order effects of the port expansion also including significant upgrades to the rail

²¹⁶ Ibid., 18.

system throughout the state and the entire Midwest all the way to Chicago. While accountable to the citizens and the federal government, Barbour effectively influenced the wider leadership with regards to executing CDBG funding. He believed that the greater good was in the long-term development of coastal infrastructure.

Barbour knew more about Mississippi's needs than did the leadership in Washington, DC. While Congress controlled the funding for the Katrina rebuilding efforts, Barbour effectively influenced the Mississippi congressional delegation on how the funding should be prioritized. He repeatedly emphasized that rebuilding was a Mississippi effort and the final decisions should be up to the locals, not their Washington representatives or federal officials. Effective meta-leaders practice "truth to power." They anticipate and manage unforeseen problems and develop solutions before they occur. Governor Barbour was highly successful in his strategies for leading up and being as good a subordinate as he was boss. Furthermore, he was a skilled negotiator and consistently successful in gaining concurrence from those he served, both in Mississippi and in Washington, DC. He did not make demands of Congress; rather, he convinced Congress that the most successful path was the path to self-sufficiency and a return to self-governance that would restore the coast much faster than it would have if Congress was simply providing public assistance in lieu of work, schools and housing.

Governor Barbour's and Dr. Bounds' presentation to congressional members and Department of Education officials was a perfect example of Barbour's acumen at consensus building across the spectrum of government.²¹⁷ The U.S. Department of Education had no real plan for how to handle the loss of so many schools. Therefore, the short-term approach to fund the new school districts over the destroyed ones seemed logical. Barbour's proposal was seen for the exceptional plan it was: to keep the students in their own communities and allocate funding immediately to rebuild destroyed and damaged schools. This consensus building served to get the money where it was needed immediately and ultimately saved the taxpayers millions in the destroyed and damaged schools would have still been rebuilt, albeit at a later date.

²¹⁷ Bounds, *Report on Mississippi's Schools*, 6.

In addition to answering to the people of Mississippi, Governor Barbour also worked for the President of the United States. With the influx of aid to the state, Barbour had to say “no” to well-meaning but misdirected assistance. Mississippi’s hurricane response plan was not adequate to support such a large event, and neither was the federal government’s. The proposal for General Honore to assume command of the entire military response may have seemed logical given the size and scope of the disaster but Barbour knew that this would take the response authority away from Mississippians. Barbour was able to stick to the plan and assert his authority over the Mississippi response while not alienating National Command Authority.

E. LEAD CONNECTIVITY

In building a wide sphere of influence, meta-leaders grasp that just as vertical linkages are important, so too are horizontal linkages. By leveraging the capacity of many adjacent centers of expertise and capacity, meta-leaders are able to engage the spectrum of agencies and private interests recruited for a shared enterprise.²¹⁸ The ability to generate a common, multi-dimensional thread of interests and involvement among entities that look at a problem from very different yet complementary vantage points is a defining trait of meta-leaders. By combining assets and efforts, meta-leaders envision and activate more than what any one entity could do on its own. This collaboration may require some traditionally competitive constituencies to turn away from well entrenched attitudes about and behaviors toward one another.

Governor Barbour did not wait for the federal government to come to the rescue. When it was apparent that resources provided by FEMA were lacking, he used other avenues for obtaining critical commodities. He leveraged his personal relationships with business owners in the state to provide resources and leveraged his military contacts to provide commodities from strategic war stockpiles. Barbour’s immediate goal was to ensure the affected population had life-sustaining commodities.

The relationships in Washington, DC that Barbour had cultivated over decades proved invaluable. His ability to work directly with President Bush, key members of

²¹⁸ Ashkenas, *The Boundaryless Organization*, 65.

Congress and other federal organizations eliminated the normal bureaucracy. He was able to go directly to the key decision makers because he was well-known and respected throughout the Capital.

Barbour was skilled at generating a common, multi-dimensional thread of interests and involvement among entities that looked at a problem from very different yet complementary vantage points. Nowhere was this more evident than in the collaboration across the entire rebuilding effort than the housing, schools, and jobs vision. Barbour effectively convinced all entities that all three of these areas were intricately connected and could not be mutually exclusive thus requiring the cooperation and “buy in” from the U.S. Department of Education, Housing and Urban Development, FEMA, Department of Labor, and a whole host of other agencies.

Barbour not only exerted his influence at the national level, he exerted his influence at consensus building across all state agencies in his vision of getting schools opened, temporary housing and jobs. In addition, he created a shared enterprise that made this vision a single entity instead of three separate and distinct initiatives. By doing so, he created a linkage that compelled state officials to consider the holistic rebuilding approach.

In the reestablishment of businesses shortly after the storm, Barbour focused on the refinery, the shipyard, and businesses such as Oreck that were willing to meet the challenges of becoming operational with little or no infrastructure. He knew that the key to getting Mississippians back to work was having places for them to work. Additionally, he convinced business owners to open as soon as possible even if the infrastructure was not completely rebuilt. This put workers back into a productive mode months earlier than had the businesses waited until full repairs were made. Barbour was able to convince these owners that getting people back to work was crucial to keeping those workers on the coast. His success was evidenced by the number of businesses that provided housing, medical care and financial support to their employees in exchange for their return to the workplace.

F. CONCLUSION

Governor Barbour's decisions and actions during Katrina juxtaposed to the theories of meta-leadership epitomize Marcus et al.'s concept of leadership during a catastrophic event.²¹⁹ Meta-leaders are capable of projecting their scope of thinking, influence, and accomplishment far beyond formal or expected bounds of authority. Meta-leaders generate widespread and cohesive action and impact that expands their domain of influence and leverage. Nowhere is this concept more apparent than Governor Barbour's leadership during Hurricane Katrina. Marcus et al. defined meta-leadership and developed the theory from examining leadership traits of many persons in leadership positions. What they did not do is apply this theory to one person during a single, catastrophic event. Barbour displayed all of the traits of meta-leadership throughout the response to Katrina and in the years following when the coast was rebuilding. The Mississippi Gulf Coast is better now than it was in 2005, prior to Katrina. There are more jobs, more homes, tourism is generating more revenues than ever, and major industries are expanding and moving to the coast. There can be little debate that the success of the coastal rebuilding was due to Governor Barbour's leadership and vision. This leadership and vision are precisely the traits described by Marcus et al.²²⁰ and serve as a sterling example of meta-leadership (see Table 1).

²¹⁹ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, "The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership," 26.

²²⁰ Ibid., 40.

5 Tenets of Meta-leadership

Phases of Response	Governor Barbour's Smart Practices	The Person	Situation	Lead the Silo	Lead Up	Lead Connectivity
Prepare	The Plan	x	x	x		
	Evacuation	x	x	x		
	Self-preparedness	x	x	x		
Respond	Chain of Command	x	x	x	x	x
	Debris Removal	x	x	x	x	x
	Commodity Distribution	x	x	x	x	x
	Communicating with the Populace	x	x	x	x	x
	Formation of the Recovery Commission	x	x	x	x	x
Recover/Mitigate	Jobs	x	x	x	x	x
	Schools	x	x	x	x	x
	Homes	x	x	x	x	x
	Rebuilding Infrastructure	x	x	x	x	x
	Port	x	x	x	x	x
	MSWIN	x	x	x	x	x

Table 1. Governor Barbour's Smart Practices

VI. DRAWING CONCLUSIONS: META-LEADERSHIP AS A MODEL FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS DURING LARGE-SCALE DISASTERS

A. IMPORTANCE OF GOOD LEADERSHIP

Organizations use leadership frameworks to articulate what is expected of their leaders in order to drive success. In order to be meaningful, such frameworks need to be reflective of the organization's cultural DNA and give people a clear sense of how they can achieve its strategic goals.²²¹ The benefit of having such models in place is that they provide clarity, consistency, and a common language for identifying, assessing, and developing leaders

A successful leadership framework is forward-looking and inspirational. It is also relevant to the present and grounded in the past. In addition, it is pragmatic and exciting at the same time; it is comprehensive yet memorable. Additionally, it is clear to everyone how it ties in with the organization's strategy and purpose and provides a roadmap to achieve the leader's vision and goals. A successful leadership framework describes the capabilities and behaviors that are needed to drive the success and are easy to assess. It is congruent with and complements the organization's values. Not only is it simple, compelling, and user-friendly, it uses language that resonates with the organization. It is distinctive and unique to the organization. Finally, a successful and inclusive framework should put more emphasis on outputs and the impact that leaders need to have on the task at hand and should not be too prescriptive.²²²

B. GOVERNOR BARBOUR AS A META-LEADER

Governor Haley Barbour's leadership during Hurricane Katrina was nothing short of outstanding. The Gulf Coast of Mississippi emerged from the devastation of Katrina as a more vibrant and economically sound region than it was before the storm. Business and industry returned as did the population. The 2010 census data revealed that the population

²²¹ Gardner, *On Leadership*, 37.

²²² *Ibid.*, 40.

of the coastal region was larger than before the storm.²²³ Revenues from the casino industry exceeded its revenues from before the storm. What is more, shipbuilding continues to be the largest in the nation and the school districts are some of the best in the state and students' test scores exceed the national average. Also, homes have been rebuilt and lives restored. By any measure, the coast has more than recovered from Katrina; it has emerged from the storm better and more productive than before the events of August 29, 2005.

Barbour built consensus. He rallied the people of Mississippi to rise to the challenge of overcoming the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. He did so by using his down-to-earth, "good ole boy" mannerisms and by using such colloquialisms as "hitch ourselves up by our bootstraps and get to work." He convinced the people of the state that, while it was a dire situation, recovery was possible. Moreover, he saw the big picture and served as an inspiration to the entire state. Finally, he was not afraid to make mistakes, and he was not afraid to admit it when he was wrong. These are the traits of the person of the meta-leader.

Barbour immediately saw the gravity of the situation; yet, he was able to make sense of conflicting information and made sound decisions without all of the information. In addition, he understood the gap between objective reality and subjective assessment and was able to formulate a vision and a plan to move forward. He did not suffer "paralysis by analysis;" rather, his situational awareness allowed him to develop cohesive priorities and to take risks. Barbour was able to function in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environment without folding to the pressure. These actions epitomize the situation tenet of meta-leadership.

There can be no doubt that Barbour led his silo. Not only did he build a team that had great experience and worked well together, he defined his expectations and allowed his cabinet to make their own decisions without fear of micro-management or retribution for honest mistakes. Moreover, he considered loyalty to be paramount, both given and received. He drove the learning curve and encouraged his people to continuously learn.

²²³ "United States Census Bureau," State and Country Quick Fact, July 8, 2014, Mississippi, accessed November 17, 2014, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html>

Barbour knew who his bosses were; they were first and foremost his constituents, and he treated them with respect and loyalty. His actions always took into account the greater good for the people. Not only that, Barbour displayed humility during his press conferences and transparently communicated with Mississippians concerning the damage, the future plans and what was expected of the residents, volunteers and responders. He also knew he was accountable to Congress, the president, and to the taxpayers of the country who were financing the recovery of his state. Barbour's actions personified the fourth tenet of meta-leadership in every way.

Finally, Barbour created cross-system connectivity in everything he did. He was quite adept at consensus building between state and federal agencies. For example, he generated a common, multi-dimensional thread of interests that involved the entire response community, from FEMA to the U.S. Department of Education to HUD and their corresponding state agencies. He not only created the links necessary to reduce bureaucracy in order to facilitate response and recovery, he was a master at getting all parties involved to share values, aspirations, and objectives. These were the requirements defined by Marcus et al. for the final tenet of meta-leadership.²²⁴

Why meta-leadership as a model for leading? Many actions taken by Governor Barbour can be applied to the five tenets of model of Marcus et al.²²⁵ Prior to my interview with Governor Barbour in August 2014, he had never heard of meta-leadership, much less ascribed to the tenets. So why call him a meta-leader if he was not intentionally following the model? Portraying Governor Barbour as a meta-leader provides an actual case study to apply to the theory. This gives credence to the theory and creates an opportunity to further study this model and apply the traits, beliefs, and values of other leaders to the meta-leader construct. Leaders can now take this model out of the classroom and into the world of complex problems. Meta-leadership is about people and relationship building. Subscribing to the tenets of meta-leadership during the team building process of an elected official's term can serve to negate many of the personality-driven issues in the aftermath of a large-scale event.

²²⁴ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, "The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership," 38.

²²⁵ Ibid., 37.

C. IMPROVEMENTS TO THE THEORY OF META-LEADERSHIP

Leadership models are only as good as the application of the theories to reality. Meta-leadership is a theory, based on a composite analysis created in an academic environment. So why look at meta-leadership as “the next best thing?” The world is changing. Supply chain management, instantaneous global communications and real-time news reporting have virtually negated most of the old, hierarchal leadership models. Modern leaders must acknowledge that today’s innovations can make complex situations even more complex. The days of “leader leading follower” in a uni-dimensional construct are gone. New leadership paradigms are a must if responses to catastrophic events are to be judged as successful. The model of meta-leadership needs to be re-examined and modified in order to be applicable to leaders in catastrophic events.

Marcus et al. state clearly that the person of the meta-leader is important. They describe the person of the meta-leader as a “big thinker,” one who is willing to take a large and complex problem and search a wide expanse for solutions.²²⁶ A meta-leader is capable of seeing the bigger picture. Marcus et al. do not discuss how a leader or elected official becomes the person of the meta-leader. The only realistic way for an elected official to become a leader is through prior experience. The only way for a leader to become a meta-leader is through a great deal of experience combined with intelligence and initiative.

Governor Barbour displayed leadership traits dating back to his days at Yazoo City High School where he was the valedictorian and class president. Barbour’s skills at politics were well-developed during his days at the RNC. He knew how to get to the key decision makers in Congress through his experiences as both the Chairman of the RNC and as a lobbyist. Had Barbour not brought 30 years of experience with him into his two terms as governor, would the decisions he made in the aftermath of Katrina been as good? Barbour understood that the response, recovery, and rebuilding should have been done by Mississippians. This was the defining decision for the state’s re-emergence from the storm better than it was before. However, it was Barbour’s knowledge of the inner

²²⁶ Ibid., 6.

workings of the nation's capital that secured the billions in funding to rebuild the state. This knowledge was based on experience. The meta-leadership model should include experience as a key portion of the Person tenet. Future research into the theory of meta-leadership should examine the role of experience to further determine how prior experience impacts the overall decision-making process of the leader. If a leader lacks experience, the model must dictate how a leader surrounds himself with key subordinates with proven records of experience in their areas of expertise. Furthermore, the leader must acknowledge that experience in order to mitigate his lack thereof.

In the situation tenet, Marcus et al. assert that the meta-leader must develop a factual, evidenced-based, clear, and actionable description of what is happening.²²⁷ This situational awareness must be done in a time-constrained environment. Marcus et al. do not emphasize that the need to expeditiously gain situational awareness is critical. Time is the one area that a leader never has enough of. Governor Barbour understood the need to immediately develop a long-term solution. His vision for homes, schools, jobs was articulated three days after the storm.²²⁸ Barbour recognized that his vision would be modified as the response and recovery phases progressed, but the fundamentals of his objectives never changed. Marcus et al.'s model must better articulate the necessity for making rapid, accurate decisions while acknowledging the constraints of time and that the meta-leaders must develop a strategic plan in the early stages of a disaster. The near-term, tactical response should be left to first responders. Meta-leaders need to not only see the big picture but also develop the plan for actions that will occur months and years from the time of the decision. Essentially, the model of meta-leadership must articulate that the biggest enemy of the leader is time. Making good, rational decisions at the onset of response dictates future success.

The other three tenets of meta-leadership are well articulated and serve as an excellent template for leaders responding to catastrophic events. Leading a silo, being a good subordinate, and building cross connectivity are common sense methodologies.

²²⁷ Ibid., 9.

²²⁸ Haley Barbour, interview with author, August 7, 2014.

Marcus et al. provide a good analytical framework for these last three tenets.²²⁹ These themes can be taught.

D. IMPLICATIONS FOR HOMELAND SECURITY

The homeland security enterprise has a plethora of systems, policies, procedures, rules, and regulations. The National Threat Advisory System is designed to warn the public of imminent terrorist attacks. Public laws dictate how funds can be spent. Billions have been spent on the acquisition of computer networks, bullet-proof vests, armored vehicles, and other items to protect the nation from terrorism. Millions have been spent on teaching the Incident Command System to local law enforcement officers, volunteer firefighters and emergency managers. And yet every time there is a large-scale event, from the Boston Marathon Bombings to Hurricane Sandy, the overarching sentiment is that there was a gross failure of leadership to identify the threat, stop the threat, or respond to the aftermath of an attack or natural disaster. Clearly, there needs to be an emphasis on leadership to the “left of the boom.” Leadership is the art of caring about the relationship between people and their organizations, and it is about team-building and strategizing. Leadership is about imagination. It is incumbent on leaders to imagine what the worst case scenario can be and then to articulate that in such a manner that subordinates understand the threat and can then develop a plan to mitigate the threat, be it terrorism, natural disasters or man-made events. The meta-leadership theory provides a template for leaders in Homeland Security to utilize. Meta-leadership facilitates multi-dimensional decision making through collaboration. Meta-leadership is not a panacea for all situations encountered by homeland security leadership. However, it does provide a foundation for leaders in homeland security to focus on in order to hone their skills at leading or governing their organizations to achieve success.

In FEMA’s after action report from Hurricane Sandy, four themes were addressed that were deemed essential to the whole of community construct endorsed by the 2011 National Preparedness Goals:

1. Ensuring unity of effort across the federal response;

²²⁹ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, “The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership,” 6.

2. Being survivor-centric;
3. Fostering unity of effort across the whole of community; and
4. Developing an agile, professional emergency management workforce.²³⁰

FEMA addressed areas for improvement in each of these themes. These recommended improvements deal with cross-organizational collaboration at the senior leader level. However, there is no mention of how these changes can be implemented. The only way to fully implement changes that facilitate cross-organizational collaboration is for FEMA to adopt a leadership model to train its leadership to emulate in large-scale events. Meta-leadership represents an ideal model to use or to at least examine as a prospective model for future events. The tenets of meta-leadership synchronize with the National Preparedness Goals that promote collaboration at senior governmental levels.

The meta-leadership model is being taught. For example, the Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness Initiative evolved after 9/11. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Foundation, working with CDC, reached out to Marcus et al. to teach meta-leadership to government and business leaders. To date, the CDC Foundation has hosted 36 leadership summits and instructed over 5,000 leaders on the concept of meta-leadership.²³¹

In 2007, the Homeland Security Advisory Council released its *Report of the Homeland Security Culture Task Force*. The report recommended that DHS adopt a leadership and training model, including joint duty and training that would help all of DHS leadership focus collaboratively on key leadership expectations and objectives.²³² However, the report's leadership model did not define the leadership process or provide a roadmap for DHS leaders to follow. Rather, the model merely listed outcomes desired to affect a positive leadership environment (see Figure 2). At no point does DHS provide a

²³⁰ Federal Emergency Management Agency, *Hurricane Sandy: FEMA After-action Report* (Washington, DC: Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2013), 3.

²³¹ "Meta-Leadership Summit Resource Center," CDC Foundation, April 2011, Instructional Seminars, accessed November 25, 2014, <http://www.cdcfoundation.org/meta-leadership>

²³² Homeland Security Advisory Council, *Report of the Homeland Security Culture Task Force* (Washington, DC: Department of Homeland Security, 2007), 3.

leadership model that describes how to be a leader. This thesis’s research question asks, “Can this model be replicated by other leaders?” Given that there is no formal training on leadership models by DHS, this question cannot be answered. With no formal curriculum, it would be up to individual leaders to attempt to learn the tenets of meta-leadership. It is an imperative that DHS develop a training curriculum that trains leadership models. Meta-leadership provides an excellent model for leading in a complex, catastrophic environment. Marcus et al. have a training regimen designed to instruct senior governmental and business leaders.²³³ This program of instruction should be implemented by DHS across the entire homeland security enterprise.

Proposed DHS Leadership Model

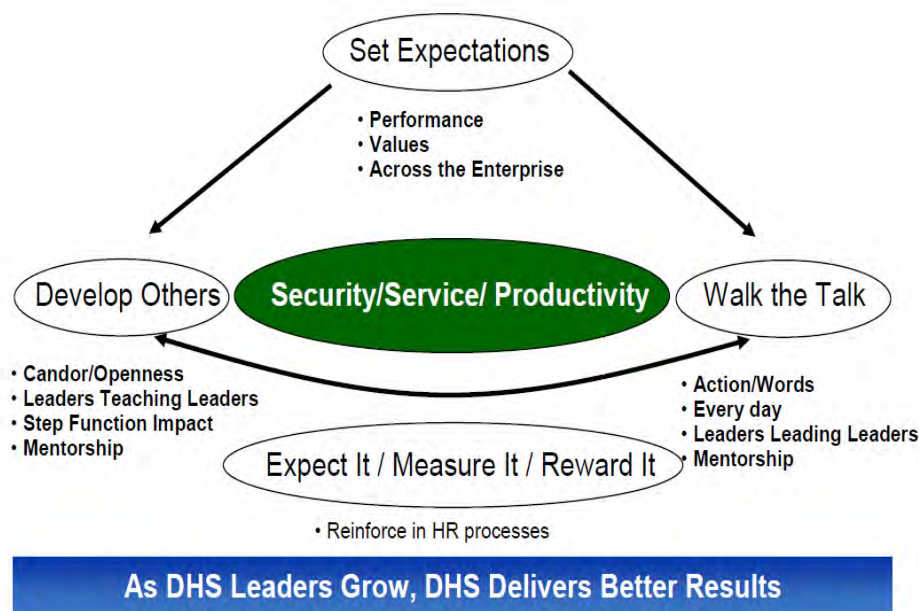


Figure 2. DHS Leadership Model²³⁴

²³³ “Meta-Leadership Summit Resource Center,” CDC Foundation, April 2011, accessed November 25, 2014, <http://www.cdcfoundation.org/meta-leadership>

²³⁴ Ibi Homeland Security Advisory Council, *Report of the Homeland Security Culture Task Force*, 5.

E. IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Leading is a process, a way of doing things, a way of moving people and organizations in a direction that results in success. The process requires cognitive knowledge, experience, and action. Leadership is both an art and a science. Marcus et al. developed their theory based on interviews and observations of hundreds of leaders.²³⁵ While this model defines the critical traits needed to become a meta-leader, it does so by extrapolating only the good qualities from the leaders studied. This creates the sense that there can be a “bionic” meta-leader in which positive traits are built upon and negative traits are removed or ignored. Future research must focus more on case study analyses of individual leaders and how their actions, both positive and negative, influenced the outcome. Furthermore, future research must determine what style of leadership was applied during a disaster. With meta-leadership currently being taught, future research must examine whether leaders in a disaster situation received meta-leadership training.

The complexities of leadership in today’s environment are obscured by the focus of traditional theories on leadership as the top-down, leader-subordinate construct typical of hierarchical organizations. During the course of their research, Marcus et al. found that approximately 85 percent of the existing leadership literature assumed a hierarchical leadership structure.²³⁶ Additionally, they discovered that many leadership theories dealt with a single level of process because it is difficult to develop multi-level theory. A single level process does not integrate all disciplines of response operations or the behavior of individuals, groups, or organizations as a whole. Leaders must catalyze action well above and beyond their formal lines of decision making and control. With the advent of outsourcing business functions, real time supply chain management, whole-of-government constructs and real-time information flow, the traditional notions of hierarchal leadership require modifications to keep pace with changing technology and governance structures.

²³⁵ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, “Meta-Leadership and National Emergency Preparedness,” 131.

²³⁶ Marcus, Dorn, and Henderson, “The Five Dimensions of Meta-Leadership,” 3.

Governor Barbour's smart practices fit each tenet of meta-leadership. The decisions he made, from revising the state's initial hurricane plan to his "jobs, schools, homes" initiative displayed a strategic, collaborative vision to expedite Mississippi's recovery from Hurricane Katrina. To effectively prove that meta-leadership provides a sterling example of leadership in catastrophic events, more case study analyses need to be conducted. A case study of Louisiana's response compared to Mississippi's response to Katrina would be a logical future research project. Furthermore, a comparison of New York's and New Jersey's response to Hurricane Sandy could further determine the validity of the meta-leader theory. To further the refinement of this leadership theory, researcher such as Marcus et al. should become involved in the examination of individual leaders and their actions during specific events rather than compiling a listing of leadership traits using numerous leaders and numerous events.

A single case study does not validate a leadership model. However, this case study proves that the theory of meta-leadership can be applied to a large catastrophe as envisioned by Marcus et al.²³⁷ Given that there is no current leadership model for leaders in homeland security or for elected officials, the theory of meta-leadership warrants consideration. Future research is imperative, but it is my hope that this study provides a reasonable foundation to continue the examination of meta-leadership. There is no doubt that Hurricane Katrina wreaked havoc on not only the Gulf Coast but also on the American public's confidence in leadership at the state and national levels. By embracing a leadership model, it is conceivable that DHS could begin a program of teaching meta-leadership to its leadership and endorsing this model to the states.

²³⁷ Ibid.

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