Damage Information, Inspections, and Validation

Public Assistance FEMA Job Aid

Applicants must provide information to substantiate that reported damage and debris impacts were caused by the declared incident. FEMA typically obtains this information by conducting inspections of damage at sites with work to be completed. However, Applicants are now able to submit damage information for validation in lieu of a FEMA site inspection. In some instances, FEMA may conduct a remote inspection (via video conference) or an in-person inspection.

This document provides an overview of the methods FEMA staff use for obtaining and validating damage information in Phase 2 of the Public Assistance (PA) Program delivery process. It includes a checklist FEMA staff use to validate Applicant-Provided damage information.

FEMA obtains and validates damage information using the following virtual or physical site inspection methods:

- Applicant-Provided Damage Information (Tabletop): Applicants collect and submit damage-related information for FEMA to review and validate;
- Video Conference Inspection (Remote): FEMA guides the Applicant through a site inspection using video conference technology such as Zoom or FaceTime; or
- In-Person Inspection (Physical): FEMA visits the facility(s) with the Applicant.

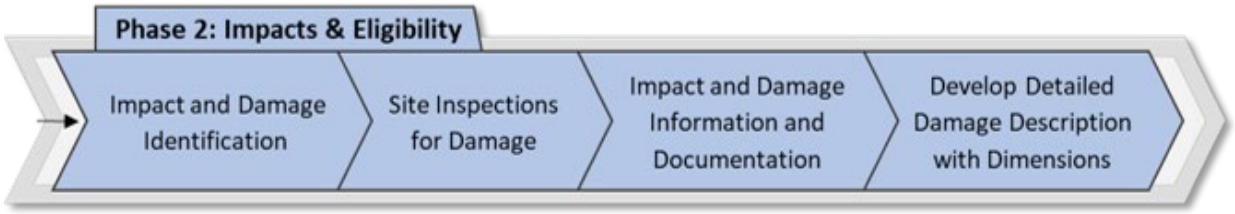

Figure 1. Impacts and Eligibility Flowchart

Applicant-Provided Damage Information (Tabletop)

Applicants submit documentation supporting claimed damage which should contain the same type and level of information depicted in FEMA's Site Inspection Reports (SIR). FEMA may use Appendix A: *Damage Validation Checklist* to review Applicant-provided damage information. FEMA uses this method for:

- Sites where costs fall below the small project maximum threshold; or
- Sites with costs equal to or above this threshold with minimal damage.

Video Conference Inspections (Remote)

Applicants perform a site inspection with a FEMA Site Inspector attending remotely using video conference technology. Applicants convey damage details while FEMA enters the information into SIRs. FEMA may implement this method for:

- Applicants with first time site inspections; or
- Applicants that are unable to provide damage information in a timely manner.

In-Person Inspections (Physical)

In limited instances, FEMA staff deploy just-in-time to incidents to manage and execute site inspections. FEMA conducts inspections onsite with the Applicant's representative(s). In general, FEMA may implement this method for complex sites requiring technical expertise or significant Environmental or Historic Preservation concerns.

Appendix A: Damage Validation Checklist

FEMA staff use this checklist to validate Applicant-provided damage information. It includes a list of documents FEMA staff may use to validate the cause of damage and damage description and dimensions. The information is not all-inclusive.

Validation is the process by which FEMA ensures Applicant-provided documentation is:

- Complete – Documentation contains all required information.
- Precise – Documentation is appropriately detailed.
- Accurate – Documentation is correct.

The Site Inspector (SI) performs an in-depth review of the information to validate the cause, description, and dimensions of damage claimed. The SI contacts the PDMG if they need additional information.

Validate Cause of Damage

The following is a list of documents staff may use to validate the claimed damage occurred due to the declared incident.

Information to Review:

- Facility maintenance records;
- Safety or inspection reports;
- Pre- and post-incident photographs, satellite imagery, or video of the damaged facility areas;
- Inventory records;
- Applicant's projects in Grants Manager from previous disasters;
- Internet search for facility description or articles related to the facility;
- Damage assessment report;
- Insurance adjuster's report;
- Technical reports; and
- Other documentation supporting pre-incident facility condition.

Verify:

- Damage was not due to deterioration, deferred maintenance, failure to take measures to protect a facility from further damage, or negligence using facility maintenance records, safety, and inspection reports;
- Damage did not exist in pre-disaster photographs or satellite imaging;
- Damage was not a result of a previous disaster based on previous projects in Grants Manager; and
- Cause of damage matches damage description using photographs.

Validate Damage Description and Dimensions

The following is a list of documents staff may use to validate the damage description and dimensions.

Information to Review:

- □ FEMA Site Inspection Reports (SIR);
- □ Applicant's damage assessment;
- □ Map of damage and work sites;
- □ Photographs, satellite imagery, or video details;
- □ Damage assessment report;
- □ Hazardous Stump Worksheets;
- □ Insurance adjuster's report;
- □ Technical reports;
- □ Facility maintenance records, inspection or safety reports; and
- □ Inventory records.

Validate Damage Description

Verify for all damage:

- □ Validate the damaged facility description corresponds with information provided in the SIR, technical reports, and Applicant-provided assessments.

Validate Damage Dimensions

Verify by type of work:

☐ ***Debris Removal (Category A)***.

- □ Debris estimates are accurate and calculations and metrics are properly applied and correct using the Calculation and Conversion Spreadsheet;
- □ Claimed stumps are properly measured using the Hazardous Stumps Worksheet (PAPPG. Appendix F), and compare to photographs;
- □ Claimed tree diameters are properly measured by comparing Applicant's assessment to provided photographs; and
- □ Debris ground measurements are accurate by comparing visual observations, physical measurements, GPS coordinates, and photographs.

☐ ***Roads and Bridges (Category C)***.

- □ Road damage greater than 200 feet in length has start/end GPS coordinates in the SIR or road inventory list;
- □ Road measurements found in the SIR (L x W) or road inventory list are accurate using Google Earth Pro;
- □ Materials and dimensions of damaged culvert(s) listed on the SIR matches the Applicant's Assessment; and

- □ Quantity of damage claimed is accurate by comparing pre-disaster design of roads, bridges and components, Applicant assessment, and photographs to SIR.

Water Control Facilities (Category D).

- □ Materials and dimensions in the Dam Report and Applicant assessment match the SIR: and
- □ Quantity of damage claimed is accurate by comparing pre-disaster design of facility, and Applicant assessment to SIR.

☐ *Buildings and Equipment (Category E).*

- □ Dimensions of damage components are appropriate for the building size (e.g., does roof SF appear accurate for dimensions of building) using architectural and engineering plans, photographs, and any other technical reports;
- □ Applicant's inventory records and the Applicant's assessment match the SIR;
- □ Dimensions of claimed damage match in the Applicant's assessment, Insurance Adjuster's Report and SIR; and
- □ The number of levels, roof type, and building materials match architectural and engineering plans, photographs, sketches and technical reports.

☐ *Utilities (Category F).*

- □ Type and number of damaged electrical poles match maps, inspection reports, maintenance records, and information in the SIR.

☐ *Parks, Recreation and Other Facilities (Category G).*

- □ Quantity of sand claimed is accurate comparing pre-and post-incident profiles, design documents, and renourishment history for beaches; and
- □ Type and number of facility contents match the Applicant's inventory list, the SIR, and pre-disaster photographs using Google Earth Pro.

Applicant Name: _____

Damage Inventory Line Item #: _____

Date Review Completed: _____

Name of Reviewer (SI): _____