



Homeland
Security

**Office of Inspector General
Strengthening Registration Intake Controls
GC-HQ-06-10**

We sought to identify and evaluate the effectiveness of procedures in-place governing the process that applicants use to register for individual disaster assistance.

Applicants typically register for disaster assistance using the FEMA 800 number (1-800-621-3362) or the Internet (www.fema.gov <<http://www.fema.gov/>>). The information requested from applicants is the same regardless of registration method. For those registering via the FEMA 800 number, a FEMA representative interviews the applicants and enters the information into the National Emergency Management Information System (NEMIS). Applicants who register via the Internet record the information themselves. As of October 30, 2005, over 2.4 million registrations were recorded for applicants from the hurricane-ravaged states of Louisiana (DR-1603 and DR1607), Mississippi (DR-1604), Alabama (DR-1605), and Texas (DR-1606). About 60 percent of the registrations were through the FEMA 800 number.

Our review disclosed certain shortcomings with FEMA's registration intake controls including instances where employees overrode the controls that are in place. Specifically, some reviewing employees approved applications for payment without thoroughly verifying that the information was correct and that there was no duplication. We recognize that some controls were eased to expedite assistance to as many applicants as possible. However, now that the majority of victims have registered, FEMA should reinstate these controls.