



February 2, 2018

**To: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)  
William B. “Brock” Long – FEMA Administrator  
FEMA FOIA Officers  
FEMA Information Management Division  
FOIA Request  
500 C street, S.W. Mailstop 3172  
Washington, D.C. 20472**

**Re: Freedom of Information Act Request**

Dear FEMA's Information Management Division Officers,

**This is a request under the Freedom of Information Act.**

I, David Josué Carrasquillo Medrano, as president of the Puertorrican Planning Society, (or SPP for Spanish acronym) and as citizen of Puerto Rico, request that a copy of the following documents regarding Hurricane María (DR-4339) be provided to me:

❖ **Spreadsheet Data (Format: Excel.xlsx or .csv)**

Master Table with all DR-4339's claims for the Individual Assistance Program. (All PR)

Master Table with all DR-4339's claims for the Housing Assistance Program. (All PR)

Master Table with all DR-4339's claims for the Public Assistance Program. (State and Local)

Master Table with all DR-4339's data for the Transitional Sheltering Assistance Program.

Master Table with all DR-4339's claims for the Rental Assistance Program.

**\*This information would not include personal data (i.e. name and social security number), but is extremely important that includes address and parcel number, for it to be usable and reliable data for decision making and spatial analysis. This data should include inspection data related to the claims.**

❖ **GIS Data (Format: Geodatabase or Shapefiles / Projection: NAD83 / State Plane / Meters)**

Master Layer with all DR-4339's claims for the Individual Assistance Program. (All PR)

Master Layer with all DR-4339's claims for the Housing Assistance Program. (All PR)

Master Layer with all DR-4339's claims for the Public Assistance Program. (State and Local)

**\*This information would not include personal data (i.e. name and social security number), but is extremely important that includes address and parcel number, for it to be usable and reliable data for decision making and spatial analysis. This data should include inspection data related to the claims.**

❖ **Reports (Format: PDFs and/or Excel and/or Word)**

Totals for every FEMA statistic, by program, collected at State Level (All PR)

Totals for every FEMA statistic, by program, collected by FEMA Region (All PR)

Totals for every FEMA statistic, by program, collected by Municipality (All PR)

Totals for every FEMA statistic, by program, collected by Zip Code (All PR)

Totals for every FEMA statistic, by program, collected by Neighborhood (Barrios) (All PR)

**\*This information should include every Program related and not related to claims. For example, in addition of the already mentioned programs above, there should be totals for Federal Force Laydown, Volunteers, Survivor Impacts, Power Restoration, Fuel Impacts, Transportation Impacts, Water/Wastewater Impacts, Hospital and Medical Care Impacts, Commodity Distribution, Points of Distribution, Contacts, Contracts and Long-Term Recovery Efforts among any other program I've fail to mention.**

Everything that is being requested through this letter has been asked before to FEMA officials appointed to Puerto Rico (DR-4339). Although we are aware that all this data takes time to process, at the same time this data is too important to guide and drive effective decision-making at all levels including: public (state and local), private, NGOs (local and foreign), professionals, communities and individuals. We are also aware that some data will be completed soon, especially all claims, since the deadline for assistance applications was extended until to March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018. **Being stressful in the fact the two (2) or three (3) more months waiting for this information would be detrimental for Puerto Rico and its future, we are kindly asking for the information as it is now and for an update once the data is completed.**

We are confident that FEMA will deliver on this to ensure the well-being of the puertorrican people and a proper, balanced and responsible transfer of know-how, tools, data, information and responsibilities towards a long-term recovery and readiness for future occasions and disaster events.

The SPP, because of hurricanes Irma and Maria, and other flooding events that followed, has assumed its responsibility to help, at every scale, free of charge, with the data analysis and information management (especially spatial analysis) required for decision making, resource allocation, policy designing, data visualization, and simple-basic population orientation on relief, recovery, mitigation and planning efforts and initiatives. This information has so many practical and scientific potential uses that it would be impossible to list on this request. Yet, we can guarantee that this data will not be used for commercial purposes and no one will profit from its use or distribution. The Puertorrican Planning Society is a non-profit organization founded in 1954 with the mission of represent, defend and advance the interests of professional planners and promote a practice of excellence and social commitment of Planning in Puerto Rico.

In addition to the request itself, we are asking for the enforcement of the Department of Justice's standards for an "Expedited Process. Puerto Rico's case falls all criteria, as follows:

**Standard #1: the lack of expedited treatment could reasonably be expected to pose a threat to someone's life or physical safety;**

- There is a huge number of people living on unsafe settlements, including, but limiting to structural damage, blown or broken roofs, flooded neighborhoods, partially and completely torn down homes, as also destroyed housing units. Although the official count of deaths related to the hurricane does not do justice to reality, it is well known that there is a significant percentage of the population living under unlivable and unsafe conditions. Not having this information would guarantee a hike on the amount of unattended people, possibly causing health problems or death, since the people working on trying to find people in need aren't capable of finding them all.

**Standard # 2: an individual will suffer the loss of substantial due process rights, expedition is appropriate. In this regard, a request will not normally be expedited merely because the requester is facing a court deadline in a judicial proceeding;**

- After the hurricane, puertorrican people have been deprived of the most basic services: power, water, communications among many other. The case on the performance of the response to Puerto Rico has been subject of an ongoing watch from the United Nations Human Rights High Commissioner with concerns about the adequacy of the US emergency response noting that "*The hurricane has aggravated the island's existing dire situation caused by debt and austerity measures*", among many other remarks regarding the proper guarantees of civil rights.

**Standard #3: the request is made by a person primarily engaged in disseminating information to the public and the information is urgently needed to inform the public concerning some actual or alleged federal government activity;**

- As president of the SPP is my responsibility to offer the people of Puerto Rico the needed tools to decide for themselves their own future. To know what where the effects of such a devastating event on our island will define everything that happens from now on. The SPP represents the collective of urban, environmental, economic, community and technical planners that work on every agency, municipality, community, organization or group that works with all decision-making processes as well as data and information management. As professionals, we are directly engaged in the dissemination of information through the development of participation processes, plans, official document, maps, statistics, and many other distributions techniques, including public sites, hearings, TV, radio, newspapers, events, gatherings and social media.

**Standard #4: the subject of the request is of widespread and exceptional media interest and the information sought involves possible questions about the government's integrity which affect public confidence.**

- The management of Hurricane María has been one of the biggest issues – if not the biggest - that has raised questions in the past year on the public opinion on government's integrity and responsibility to its citizens. This proves to be real through the infinite number of articles and pieces on all newspapers, widespread media and day-to-day life not only in Puerto Rico, but also in the US Mainland and beyond, making this a globally watched disaster event.

I am willing to pay fees for this request, as your protocol establishes if there is no option. Yet, given the nature of this request, we don't see any fee should be applied. So, I request a waiver of all fees for this request.

Disclosure of the requested information to me is in the public interest because it will without a doubt contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government managing DR-4339 and is not in my commercial interest.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. And feel free to contact me at any time to clear up any doubts about any detail. The preferred method would be through my email.

Sincerely,



**Plan. David J. Carrasquillo Medrano, PPL**

President

Puertorrican Planning Society

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