



“Hagerty was able to develop a sound and comprehensive assessment tool due to its technical knowledge and experience in disaster housing. The on-line database used by housing manufacturers was the result of innovative thinking.”

CASE STUDY

Preparedness and Crisis Recovery

Assessing Housing Options in a Disaster Situation

“Can we do any better than an expensive short-term solution, which doesn’t always work?”

In the past few years, several major hurricanes displaced tens of thousands of households in the southeastern United States. The U.S. government responded by providing these families with temporary housing in the form of trailers and mobile homes. Trailers were a welcome temporary solution, but came with issues. For one, the need for trailers exceeded manufacturers’ production capacity, resulting in long waiting times for units. In addition, trailers were expensive to produce and difficult to transport and install—and, it wasn’t completely clear that they were a viable solution in the first place. Even if production and availability had not been issues, travel trailers were not a suitable housing solution for some hurricane areas. Finally, after the time and expense of providing trailers immediately after a hurricane, trailers did not address the long-term needs of most families who had lost their homes.

To develop solutions to the disaster housing problem, the U.S. government established the Joint Housing Solutions Group (JHSG), a multi-agency organization developed to address the challenge of providing direct housing assistance. The JHSG determined that a range of housing options should be identified and assessed during a period of normalcy, so that suitable housing options could be mobilized quickly after a disaster. The JHSG turned to Hagerty to lead its housing assessment project.

Hagerty provided a multidisciplinary team to create a housing solutions assessment tool. The team, led by a former FEMA regional administrator and recipient of the Hammer Award, included veterans of hurricanes in Florida and the Gulf Coast. The Hagerty team leveraged its combined knowledge of disaster response and recovery to develop a comprehensive assessment tool that evaluated temporary housing options on the basis of cost, timeliness, livability, and range of use. The tool Hagerty developed gave the JHSG a method of selecting an appropriate housing option for each community after a disaster.

Hagerty’s assessment tool met all of the JHSG’s requirements. However, it was unclear whether it could be implemented in a cost-effective manner, particularly since it was initially envisioned that FEMA or its counterparts would assess each housing option using a paper survey tool.

The Turning Point.

The Hagerty team determined that there was a better way. Hagerty database programmers built a Web-based tool that would allow housing providers anywhere in the country to enter information remotely. Their solutions would be assessed, and promising solutions would then receive further scrutiny and possible consideration. This solution had the potential to save the federal government time and money. It was no longer necessary for a team of consultants to travel across the country to assess housing solutions that might turn out to be completely unrealistic. In addition, the JHSG could assess a significantly larger pool of potential solutions.

A Successful Journey. A Welcome Destination.

In the future, Hagerty’s Web-based Housing Assessment Tool (HAT) makes it possible for the JHSG to assess a range of viable temporary housing options that can be deployed immediately following a catastrophic event. Because HAT examines a variety of factors including the type of disaster, its location, and even the demographics of displaced families, local officials and agencies now have the ability to match optimal solutions with disaster needs. In a time of crisis, HAT will help bring a fast, effective, relevant and sustainable solution to people with urgent housing needs.



“Responsible organizations plan for the worst. The best respond and recover with speed, agility, and confidence.”

CAPABILITY

Preparedness and Crisis Recovery

The Questions

- Are you aware of the threats facing your organization or jurisdiction? Do you have a plan to address those threats or risks?
- Do you have a comprehensive and realistic plan to recover from an emergency or disaster?
- Are you getting the most from the funds you receive from your federal grant?

The Facts

September 11th and Hurricane Katrina brought disaster preparedness to the forefront of public consciousness. Every organization, whether in the public or private sector, now focuses more time, money, and energy on this issue. However, your next crisis may be unlike any you have ever faced. Although some events are predictable—it is highly likely that the southeastern United States will experience another major hurricane—some events defy imagination. You need to have a set of flexible plans and systems in place so you are prepared for any number of potential emergencies, disasters, or crises.

Do you have the necessary plans and systems in place?

The Best Preparation for the Worst

Hagerty Consulting and its professionals have expertise in every phase of disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. Hagerty is comprised of former Federal Coordinating Officers, former FEMA regional directors, and consultants and public managers who have managed numerous disaster response and recovery efforts. Hagerty professionals specialize in using technology, data, and smart business processes to improve response and recovery operations. Equally important, Hagerty has unparalleled expertise and experience with complex federal programs, grants, and loans that help states and local communities recover from emergencies and disasters.

Hagerty professionals provide the full range of preparedness, response, and recovery services; they will help you:

- Conduct risk assessments, capability assessments, and gap analyses, and develop strategic plans to guide your preparation for natural and human caused events
- Develop emergency response and recovery plans, COG and COOP plans, and hazard mitigation plans
- Assess your training needs, develop a training plan, and conduct training for a range of emergency response and recovery systems and programs
- Develop and implement management plans, systems, and tools that will help you use data and effectively manage emergency response and recovery operations
- Manage state and federal recovery programs
- Identify funding opportunities and prepare grant applications for Homeland Security and emergency preparedness, response, and recovery funds

Hagerty will help you plan for a crisis. If or when a crisis occurs, Hagerty will help you respond and recover with agility and confidence.

Hagerty professionals are knowledgeable about many preparedness and recovery systems and programs, including:

Continuity of Operations COOP
 National Incident Management System NIMS
 FEMA Individual and Public Assistance
 FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
 Homeland Security Grant Program