



[FEMA Joint Housing Solutions Group](#)

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, FEMA realized that it needed to increase the range of disaster housing options and develop a systematic approach to identifying and evaluating potential alternative housing. FEMA formed the Joint Housing Solutions Group to help achieve these goals.

ATCS staff played a leadership role in developing for FEMA a Housing Assessment Tool (HAT) and a systematic process for outreaching, assessing, procuring and piloting alternative housing options for disaster stricken victims and communities. The intent is to increase and improve the agency's repertoire of disaster housing options and capacities, such as developing and procuring rapid deployable housing and high-density housing units. The HAT helps to evaluate each housing option based on cost, timeliness, livability, and range of use. Deliverables to date have grown to include also an online version of the HAT hosted on the FEMA RIMS network, a catalog of housing options, an extensive contract list of housing designers and builders, new performance specifications for alternative housing, and a quick-buy procurement process, where units suitable for FEMA's use would be pre-qualified and contractually approved for purchase within 48 hours of a task order issued. The most recent pre-qualified units will be piloted in spring 2009 at the National Emergency Training Campus in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

Aside from housing assessment and alternative housing options, ATCS staff has recently created also a Housing Mission Scoping Tool to help FEMA Individual Assistance decision-makers project potential disaster housing needs, coordinate and process the diverse lines of housing related data and ground truths, and effectively managing housing resources such as rental units, hotel lodging, and direct housing options. FEMA IA leaders are receptive of the tool and have requested ATCS staff to conduct introductory presentations and training to FEMA IA staff.