RAND Gulf States Policy Institute

Committed to strengthening the well-being of the U.S. Gulf States through research and analysis
Our research and analysis helps improve policy and decisionmaking and the lives of people in the U.S. Gulf States.
Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama face critical challenges that require fact-based, actionable solutions grounded in rigorous analysis. How can our public schools and school districts improve performance within limited budgets? What steps can be taken to ensure that the region’s workforce has the right skills? How can we better secure our coastline and create resilient communities built to weather storms, coastal erosion, and other threats?

The RAND Gulf States Policy Institute is well positioned to help solve such challenges. RAND brings together the finest researchers in the world and utilizes the very best analytical tools and methods to develop objective policy solutions.
Coastal Protection and Disaster Preparedness

Natural hazards such as hurricanes and floods take lives, threaten livelihoods, and cost billions of dollars. RAND researchers assess vulnerabilities and devise strategies to help protect people, property, and the environment.

RAND played an integral role in the formulation of Louisiana’s long-range master plan for a sustainable coast. To guide the state’s investments and help its coastal citizens plan for the future, RAND developed a new hurricane flood risk model to assess effects of projects designed to reduce damage from flooding, as well as a planning framework and decision support model to develop and compare different coast-wide groupings of risk reduction and restoration projects. The Louisiana legislature unanimously approved the master plan in May 2012 after months of public comment and review.

These modeling efforts stand at the forefront of work on the topic of coastal restoration and sustainability. They have had a major impact on Gulf State infrastructure planning, and RAND continues to support Louisiana as it implements and updates its 50-year plan.

To view this research, visit www.rand.org/t/RR437 Strengthening Coastal Planning: How Coastal Regions Could Benefit from Louisiana’s Planning and Analysis Framework (2014). For more information on RAND’s coastal planning research, visit www.rand.org/coastal.
Energy

The U.S. Gulf Coast is an important production, processing, and distribution hub for the nation’s energy. Business leaders and policymakers at all levels of government routinely make choices that will influence the environment, economic development, and employment. To make decisions, they need information that is both scientifically rigorous and objective.

In 2013, RAND researchers conducted a study on U.S. industrial capacity, including manufacturing facilities and the labor force, to build and lay pipelines, drill oil and natural gas wells, and inject carbon dioxide into oil reservoirs for enhanced oil recovery. Louisiana—a key center for the U.S. oil and gas industry—is home to a large share of these capacities. The findings demonstrate that the nation’s carbon storage industrial base has the capacity to meet the development needs for enhanced oil recovery and geologic storage in the coming years.

To view this research, visit www.rand.org/t/TR1300 The Industrial Base for Carbon Dioxide Storage: Status and Prospects (2013). For more information on RAND’s energy-related research, visit www.rand.org/eeed.
The region has deep experience in disaster preparation and recovery. But the concept of resilience is just now taking root. The region is beginning to understand how it can better withstand both forecasted and unexpected events by pooling resources, adapting to change, organizing action, and learning from experience.

RAND has developed a web-based, easy-to-use training application that distills the extensive body of research on resilience-building into simple steps that communities and organizations in the region can take to strengthen themselves against all kinds of disasters.

To view this research, visit www.rand.org/t/TL109 Building Resilient Communities: An Online Training (2013). For more information on RAND’s community resilience research, visit www.rand.org/resilience.
Health and Health Care

As the region confronts health challenges and a changing health care system, policymakers need meaningful, rigorous analysis to inform their decisions. RAND’s health researchers focus extensively on population health and its ties to health care, as well as the scientific basis for improving service delivery, health system performance, and organizational effectiveness.

RAND researchers and colleagues at the Los Angeles Unified School District and the University of California, Los Angeles, developed the Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS) program to reduce posttraumatic stress and depression in students exposed to violence. The intervention was later used to great effect to help New Orleans students in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The CBITS training website is available for mental health professionals interested in learning to deliver this intervention.

To view this program, visit cbitsprogram.org. See also www.rand.org/t/TR1145 The Transformation of a School System: Principal, Teacher, and Parent Perceptions of Charter and Traditional Schools in Post-Katrina New Orleans (2011). For more information on RAND’s health and health policy research, visit www.rand.org/health.
Education and Workforce Development

The region is in need of an appropriately balanced workforce that attracts businesses and promotes economic development. Yet the region continues to face significant challenges in education and training. For more than three decades, RAND’s education experts have helped schools and districts find solutions through research and best practices.

New Orleans–based Leading Educators, a national two-year fellowship program that develops teachers for leadership positions, has selected RAND to evaluate its program’s effectiveness. The study will examine whether teacher graduates of Leading Educators improve student achievement and whether they are more likely to remain in high-need urban schools.

To view this program, visit leadingeducators.org. For more information on RAND’s education research, visit www.rand.org/education.
An efficient, effective, accountable, and fair justice process for all is key to the region’s social and economic well-being. RAND researchers have expertise in providing insights and solutions to public- and private-sector decisionmakers across numerous domains, including criminal and civil justice; public safety; insurance and compensation policy; and homeland security.

After Hurricane Katrina, resignations from the New Orleans Police Department increased, and the department went more than a year without recruiting enough candidates to justify a police academy training course. RAND offered practical recommendations to improve recruiting and retention in *Recruitment and Retention: Lessons for the New Orleans Police Department* (2007). For more information on RAND’s safety and justice research, visit www.rand.org/sj.
“We’re not here for the short term. This is a region that before the hurricane had a lot of policy challenges. Those have been multiplied by this tragedy. We feel it’s important to the country as a whole that this region recover.”

James A. Thomson, President Emeritus, RAND Corporation
in The Advocate–Baton Rouge, December 22, 2005
History of the RAND Gulf States Policy Institute

The RAND Corporation, a nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decisionmaking through research and analysis, founded the RAND Gulf States Policy Institute in 2005 after Hurricane Katrina to inform policies for long-term recovery and economic development in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama.

In the months following the storm, RAND contributed its services and tackled issues such as housing and health care, as well as other needs of families affected by the storm. We continue to support the region with research and analysis that is independent of political and financial conflicts of interest.
1,800 Staff
Our people bring a diverse range of professional, educational, and cultural backgrounds to their project teams.

46 Countries
With locations in North America, Europe, and Australia, RAND attracts top talent from almost four dozen nations.

71 Languages
Many of our staff are multilingual. Languages spoken include Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Russian, and Spanish.

Degrees
- Doctorate: 53%
- Master’s: 34%
- Bachelor’s: 8%
- Other: 1%
- JD: 1%
- MD: 3%

For more information about the RAND Gulf States Policy Institute, contact
Dr. Gary Cecchine, Director of Research
Phone: 504.299.3432
Email: cecchine@rand.org
or visit www.rand.org/gulf-states.html

Headquarters Campus
RAND Corporation
1776 Main Street
P.O. Box 2138
Santa Monica, CA 90407-2138

Washington, DC
Pittsburgh, PA
New Orleans, LA
Boston, MA
Cambridge, UK
Brussels, BE
Canberra, AU

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The RAND Corporation is a research organization that develops solutions to public policy challenges to help make communities throughout the world safer and more secure, healthier and more prosperous. RAND is nonprofit, nonpartisan, and committed to the public interest.

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