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LESSON LEARNED

Emergency Operations Center Management: Ensuring Information Management Systems Can Accommodate a Large Number of Users

SUMMARY

Emergency operations center (EOC) managers should ensure that information management hardware and software systems can accommodate the influx of users anticipated during activation for a major event.

DESCRIPTION

On May 4–5, 2010, the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management sponsored the HurrEx 2010 Full-Scale Exercise (FSE). The FSE scenario simulated the effects of a Category 4 hurricane making landfall in North Carolina and tracking over the central and eastern areas of the state. The purpose of the FSE was to validate the state emergency operations plan, agency plans, and statewide communication interoperability and redundancies. The FSE was also intended to enable state emergency response team personnel to become familiar with the new HURREVAC 2010 software. Personnel from 6 federal, 33 state, 68 local, and 9 private sector organizations participated in the FSE.

At the beginning of the FSE, many participants could not access North Carolina's WebEOC system. Once this issue was resolved, many still could not receive updates or enter information into the system. Participants continued to attempt to enter documentation into WebEOC rather than choosing to use paper documentation instead. This resulted in delays in accessing or entering documentation. This also resulted in problems receiving requests and information from counties in a timely manner.

The FSE after-action report (AAR) notes that the influx of a large number of users contributed to these WebEOC problems during the exercise. The AAR recommends that the North Carolina WebEOC system's hardware and software should be upgraded so that the system can accommodate high usage during a large-scale event.

EOC managers should ensure that information management hardware and software systems can accommodate the influx of users anticipated during activation for a major event.

CITATION

North Carolina Division of Emergency Management. *HurrEx 2010 After Action Report/Improvement Plan – Draft.* 21 Jul 2010.
https://www.llis.dhs.gov/docdetails/details.do?contentID=46324

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