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LESSON LEARNED

Emergency Operations Center Management: Planning for the Loss of Communications and Information Management Systems

SUMMARY

Emergency operations center (EOC) managers should develop procedures for the use of alternate systems in the event that primary communications or information management systems fail during an activation.

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.

HURREVAC 2010 is a storm-tracking and decision-assistance tool for government emergency managers developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. For more about HURREVAC 2010, please visit: <http://www.hurrevac.com/index.html>.

During the FSE, the state regional coordination center (RCC)-East used landline, cellular telephones, and WebEOC to communicate with the state EOC and other operations centers. The RCC-East provided the required communications procedures and conducted all checks; however, RCC-East experienced the loss and disruption of WebEOC during the FSE. The after-action report (AAR) notes that alternate procedures are necessary to mitigate the effect on operations of a loss or disruption of WebEOC or communications. The AAR recommends that RCC-East develop an alternate plan for the loss or disruption of WebEOC or communications.

EOC managers should develop procedures for the use of alternate systems in the event that primary communications or information management systems fail during an activation.

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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