

ORLANDO COUNTY SPECIAL NEEDS SHELTER
California Interagency Incident Management Team –1 Vail
FL-FEM-004041

Background:

A Presidential Disaster Declaration was issued on September 4, 2004 for Hurricane Frances in Florida. An Area Command Team and six Type 1 Incident Management Teams were assigned to support recovery efforts. Additional resources were mobilized as part of the relief effort, including aviation assets, mobile caterers, and national buying teams, Type 1 crews and miscellaneous overhead personnel.

California Interagency Incident Management Team 1 (CIIMT 1) was assigned to assist with logistical support to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) at the Orlando County Convention Center (OCCC) where a Special Needs Shelter was established. The shelter was set up to assist special needs patients, residents and caregivers displaced due to the effects of Hurricane Frances. The team was transported by air to Orlando, Florida on September 12, 2004.

CIIMT 1 was given the task to support all of the logistical operations at the Special Needs Shelter, for patients, residents, caregivers and support personnel. The CIIMT was responsible for developing a system for and maintaining a tracking record on each person.

COMMAND

This is the first time that the Forest Service ESF-4 was tasked to support a Special Needs Shelter under a Mass Care Mission Assignment working with National Disaster Medical Services (NDMS), Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMATs), HHS and the U. S. Public Health Service. Further, the NDMS and HHS had never been tasked with this type of mission before. As such, there were no rules or past experiences from which to base the team's role and expected performance. The assignment had high potential for political and social considerations based on a potential population of 8,000 patients, caregivers and response personnel.

What went well:

- There was a desire by all agencies to clarify the mission and organize to manage the special needs shelter under one management structure. The level of confusion experienced early on was cleared up within 24 hours of the arrival of CIIMT 1.
- The transition to a formal Unified Command between HHS and CIIMT 1 with American Red Cross support was implemented quickly and without hesitation.

- Direction provided by FEMA Operations, Dan Griffiths, at the Disaster Field Office (DFO) was critical and effective.

Areas of concern and recommendations:

- The individual Mission Assignment tasking several ESF's does not readily identify a management structure for the overall management. FEMA ERT-A provides minimal support, but no overall management. As such, each agency thinks they are in command, while in reality they are only managing within their own task. **Recommendations: 1) Assign an IMT at the same time the Mass Care ESF is tasked. 2) Provide ICS training for other agencies.**
- ICS is merely a management system. The term "Command" may be misleading on these missions. Rather, the concept of "event management" must be emphasized. **Recommendation: Utilize the IMT to provide for the overall event management "umbrella" utilizing the principles of ICS.**

Conclusion:

- **It can be done** within the capabilities of the Forest Service ESF-4 role under the National Response Plan.

SAFETY

What went well:

- The team arrived at the Convention Center on September 12, and immediately assisted with patient check-in and got familiar with some of the shelter activities. On the first full day of the assignment it became apparent that a daily joint safety meeting was needed to get an overall assessment of shelter concerns and issues encountered by all agencies involved. The joint safety meeting facilitated daily task assignments throughout the participating agencies reducing the inherent redundancy resulting from multiple safety officers for each agency. Also included were Public Health Service functions Infection Control, Quality Control, and Environmental Health. This forum brought up and discussed a variety of safety issues at the center and assigned responsibility for mitigation to various members of the group. This was a very effective method for dealing with safety issues without duplication of effort.
- The Orange County Convention Center provided a good work environment for clinical, administrative and logistical support for the incident.
- CIIMT 1 Medical Unit Leader, Matt Lipson was invaluable providing technical assistance to the Safety Unit.

Areas of concern and recommendations:

- Due to the limited in-briefing before CIIMT 1 started with initial tasks, there were many agencies doing good work, but no one overall safety function with oversight for the entire shelter operations. **Recommendation:** Provide thorough in-briefing covering all agencies' responsibilities, activities, and chain of command.
- Lack of knowledge by all participating agencies of the other agencies capabilities and how they fit into the incident structure. **Recommendation:** Provide information, website, handouts on all agencies participating in disaster response.
- CIIMT 1 safety officer's encountered some difficulty getting convention center staff to follow food serving protocols designed to minimize cross contamination among residents and incident personnel. **Recommendation:** This situation could be avoided by utilizing the same National Caterers used on fire incidents.
- The shower units rented for use by center residents were minimally acceptable for geriatric use. They had to be modified with rubber mats and non-skid tape on surfaces to make them safe for use. **Recommendation:** Utilize National Caterers used on fire incidents.

Conclusion:

- There was good cooperation between the CIIMT 1 and all agencies involved in managing the center. Everyone was willing to work together as an efficient organization providing a safe and effective shelter for hurricane victims with special needs.
- There were no known reportable injuries associated with this incident (as of 09/16/2004). No known safety related issues have been left unresolved.

INFORMATION

The Information Section for Team 1 consisted of:

Sam Wilbanks (IOFR)

Chuck Dickson (Deputy IOFR)

Charlie Henderson (FEMA)

Dick Gifford (FEMA)

Gordon Vander Till (American Rd Cross)

Bill Swartley

Sandra Taylor

Joe Hogue

The information section arrived in Orlando, FL and met with two FEMA Information Officers (Charlie Henderson and Dick Gifford) and one Red Cross IOF (Gordon Till). Henderson, Gifford and Till were already engaged with television crews and were dealing with the news media interest.

Facility services (TV, electricity, telephones) were immediately available through the Orange County Convention Center. This was very helpful to our Section.

The “full service” Information Center was set up for the purpose of providing information to residents, their attendants and family members and Shelter workers. Internet access on two computers was available at the center, along with updated maps and other pertinent hurricane information on three status boards. Also, a message board was in place at the center. Staffed with part of the information team from 0700 hours to 1700 hours, the center was very effective serving all persons within the shelter.

Throughout the Special Needs Shelter, televisions were available for everyone to watch news broadcasts day and night. Each television was also capable of showing VHS formatted programs.

From the beginning, local news media was made aware of the Shelter by the news desk personnel at the Disaster Field Office. In the days that followed, news agencies returned often with requests for follow-up interviews. Both ‘live’ and ‘taped’ interviews were conducted with local television. Live and taped television and radio interviews were also conducted with three California-based network stations.

The Orlando Sentinel wrote an excellent story depicting the experiences of many of the residents in the Shelter.

Daily conference calls hosted by the Joint Information Center (Orlando DFO) were held to keep communications open and provide needed information.

The CIIMT-1 Information Officer Staff (Wilbanks/Dickson) charged three FEMA-ordered IOFs (Swartley/Hogue/Taylor) assigned to their Team to assess and implement a shelter information function. After assessing the facility layout and customer diversity/needs within the facility, the FEMA IOFs established a staff-supported Satellite Information Center adjacent to the dining hall and shower areas; thus capturing foot traffic from shelter residents, medical, and incident and facility support staff. The following services were provided at the manned Satellite Information Center:

- Computer and printers with wireless internet support
- Transportable Bulletin Boards
- Free Daily Newspapers
- Internet ‘Look-Up’ Services
- ‘One-Way’ Library
- DFO GIS Mapping Support
- Digital Picture Services

Our team completed the Special Needs Shelter assignment on September 17th, 2004.

FINANCE

The Finance section was staffed with Laurie Beck (FSC1), Joan Disney (COST), Teresa Reniff (TIME), Tauna Clausen (TIME), Kathy O'Hara (PTRC), and Bob Hemus (COMP/CLAIMS). LuAnn Grover was assigned Incident Business Advisor (IBA). Since the finance section was only responsible for the team other duties were sought out by the section. Laundry duties were performed by Kathy and Teresa. Tauna assisted Plans by helping to devise a check-in system for patients and personnel. Upon arrival to the Convention Center we were put to work assisting DMAT in finding patients beds, making beds and making patients comfortable.

We arrived in Orlando, Florida, on Sunday afternoon, September 12, 2004. The mission was to support a Special Needs Shelter and DMAT and NDMS professionals for FEMA. On Monday afternoon the IMT was charged with managing the facility and supporting HHS; and HHS would manage the medical care.

We met with SmartCity (exclusive technology provider for the Convention Center) to facilitate payment of their invoice. FEMA had directed SmartCity to install phone lines and internet lines, but no one with authority had been involved in the transaction. Larry Logan, BUYL, will pay the invoice, and FEMA will reimburse the Forest Service. The invoice will be approximately \$35,000.

Disney Textiles Services provided 2,400 sheets, 2,250 pillowcases, and 500 pillows for use. They agreed to clean the linens at no charge. The pillows are to be discarded after the incident. A memo was prepared and faxed to Disney to document the agreement.

FEMA had signed a contract with Levy Restaurant (exclusive caterer for the Convention Center) to provide the meals for the Shelter. The contract was in the amount of \$680,000 plus to provide approximately 9,000 meals per day for five days. Bill Bertsch, FEMA Comptroller, had their attorney review the contract to see if it could be renegotiated. The caterer was not serving over 1,500 meals per day. Bill said that FEMA was obligated to pay the contract, but the food purchased would be taken from the company and distributed to local charitable organizations in Orlando and surrounding areas.

The oxygen was contracted by the Florida Department of Health and Elder Affairs.

Bill Bertsch located a copy of the agreement for the facility. FEMA had agreed to pay \$125,000 for use of the exhibit hall and office space through September 22.

Time

The Incident Time System (ITS) was used to capture all hours worked by CIIMT 1 and support personnel. All AD time sheets were sent home to the sponsoring unit. There were no Emergency Equipment Rental Agreements used on the incident so there are no payment packages to process. Excessive hours were attributed to travel and transition of

personnel to night shift. Justification statements were completed and are included in the documentation package. Bennett's type 1 team has been assigned the same incident number and job code so the ITS database will be transferred to them upon our departure.

Comp/Claims

There were no injuries or claims reported for the incident.

Cost

Costs were estimated using ICARS. Cost and Obligation reports were uploaded daily to the COST group at SACC. Estimates included all costs for personnel ordered through the ROSS ordering system and all equipment and supplies paid for by the Buying Team. The I-Suite database for this incident began on 09/05/04 and includes both the Homestead Receiving and Distribution and the Orlando Special Needs Shelter assignments. Total estimated costs 09/05/04 through 09/17/04 are \$875,000. Estimated costs for the Orange County Special Needs Shelter assignment from 09/12/04 through 09/18/04 are \$496,000.

The I-Suite database as of 09/17/04 was closed out and uploaded to the repository.

Buying Team

No issues were raised by Larry Logan's National Buying Team. The Buying Team was a great asset to the accomplishment of our mission.

What went well:

- Good support from the GACC and from Liz Kinney, Incident Business Management Specialist.
- Excellent IBA assigned to CIIMT One. LuAnn Grover was an exceptional addition to the team and very helpful in resolving issues.
- Having a Buying Team and IBA attached to the team worked well. There was quick accessibility to everyone in the event of a question or problem.
- Having a FEMA Comptroller on sight was positive and helped answer many questions. Bill Bertsch was knowledgeable of IMTs, Incident Command System, and supportive of our capabilities.
- The process for keeping the team together and making decisions for the whole team, including the employees attached to the team from Homestead. No one was left behind. It is a credit to the system the way the Forest Service, et al, takes care of their employees

- Having a Buying Team and IBA attached to the team worked well. Accessibility to the team was immediate in the event of a question or problem.
- The ROSS download was beneficial. It helped to know what resources had been ordered and when they would arrive. Orders that we thought were cancelled were found not to be which enabled us to cancel them before travel began.
- Having a FEMA Comptroller on sight was positive and helped answer many questions. Bill Bertsch was knowledgeable of IMTs, Incident Command System, and supportive of our capabilities.

Areas of concern and recommendations:

- Recommend an Incident Business Advisor from the Forest Service and a comptroller from FEMA continue to be assigned to incidents.
- Recommend that a Comptroller for FEMA be brought in immediately at onset of a declaration to over see establishment of the center or operation.
- It was challenging to ensure payments to vendor for agreements and actions made by another agency, i.e., payment to the phone line, internet line vendor for work directed by FEMA by a person without any procurement authority. It caused some anxiety by the vendor.
- Another challenge was doing the buying for HHS. They were not used to our process or procedures. It was explained to them and demonstrated to them how to place orders and receive orders. It would have been beneficial to have mini-training for all of the people involved. We had training for the people who were initially going to be doing the ordering, but it became apparent that there were more people from HHS who wanted to be involved. The recommendation is to practice patience and remember that they want to be involved, too.

Conclusion:

- This was a very interesting assignment. Everyone we worked with was helpful, friendly, and professional. Everyone wanted to do the best job they could, even though many did jobs outside of their training and usual positions.

LOGISTICS

The Convention center was a very good facility for a shelter. Once unified command was established communications were greatly improved. Cooperation with Convention center personnel was very good and everything went well. The cooperation of HHS, Florida Elder Affairs, FEMA contributed to a very well run operation.

When we first arrived there was a lack of direction and lack of communication between groups present. When situations where multiple organizations are all working on a common task at the earliest opportunity a decision needs to be made about which organization is going to take the lead. Each section needs to meet with their counterparts from other agencies and share their knowledge.

Facilities

The Facilities unit was unclear of its mission and the role it would play at this incident. There was not a clear path to follow due to the number of agencies and which agency was ultimately in charge. There was a learning curve as to how each Federal agency related to the other. After there was a decision made who was in charge, a goal was set and responsibilities were made clearer.

The HHS logistics branch was easy to work with. The only improvements that the facilities unit would have are to communicate clearly and completely. A preorder list to function in the “field” would be of great use to HHS.

The Orange County Convention Center has an outstanding support structure for this type of function and was very helpful in accomplishing tasks. The OCCC has adequate space for the original mission to support 8000 people if all the buildings were used.

There was a great deal to learn about what the HHS does and what they can and can't do. The HHS has no logistics support equipment or the mechanism to rapidly obtain this type of equipment. The IMT needs to be that part of the puzzle. They come complete with all medical equipment, M.D.s, Nurses, Pharmacists and administrators.

Everybody had very good attitudes in this new environment, learning to work with other agencies.

Ground Support

When the FEMA team left I don't feel that I was completely informed as to what they were taking and what would be left to work with. The facility that we had was excellent for the task we were assigned. I would like to see the ordering process changed to allow Unit Leaders who are trained to make decisions be able to order needed supplies without having to get signatures.

Communications

Upon initial arrival to the convention center Sunday, our mission was unclear. We were being briefed by our Deputy IC on initial tasking after his in briefing from FEMA. The communications unit really did not have an assigned mission or task. We assisted when we were needed. The most important role that the communication unit played was to assist in telephone list/line management. The cost of telephone lines in the convention center was shocking at best. The IMT IBA along with myself were amazed with the amount of lines (150) ordered by Chris Turner of FEMA Logistics Communication unit.

When I was tasked with line accountability, I could not account for 105 lines being used. I cancelled those lines with concurrence of my counter part with HHS Bill Herniques. It became a key role of the COML to assist the teams finance section to work with the local convention center vendor in cost containment and line supervision. The communications staff assisted when needed with other duties as assigned. Worked with team members in establishing the ICP set up. Assisted in getting computers up and running on wireless infrastructure. Telephone list accountability provided by the convention center was ever changing.

Items that went well in communications:

- Communications were already in place when IMT arrived.
- Good Transition from FEMA Logistic Communications to IMT Communications
- List of contacts of who is who

Areas of concern and recommendations:

- Convention Center Communications
- Identified early on the cost of telephone lines (Concern)
 - Cost containment for incident communication needs to be identified and appropriate resources implemented. (Recommendation)
- Working Relationships with FEMA, State of Florida, and HHS & Red Cross went well for communications, my only concern is that not every one had a good understanding of our capabilities and fully understood the ICS system the Forest Service works under. I suggest the other agencies that are not familiar with the ICS system, train with agencies that use the ICS system.
- Networking of personnel of other Federal, State and Local Agencies went as well as could be expected. Working with others outside their normal workforce would assist in better interoperability between agencies.
- Gaining trust in other Agencies level of knowledge of the ICS system
- Maximizing communication resources available to incident:
 - Forest Service communication equipment
 - Commercial Vendors (Nextel)
 - Local Government Radio Communications System
 - FEMA communications equipment
 - Red Cross resources
- Identifying contingency communication plans if shelter had 3,000 to 8,000 people to accommodate. I suggest working with local agencies (Fire, EMS, and Law) for resources available to assist the incident.
- Understanding acronyms of all the different agencies
- Having a good transition plan for each unit
 - Current operational plan
 - Current resources assigned to unit
 - Current resources still outstanding (ETA to incident)

Conclusion:

- This was a very good learning incident for me as well as my staff. We will leave this event with additional skills and knowledge in how FEMA operates. We have also actively participated in briefing and planning process with FEMA, HHS, and Red Cross. I believe everyone has learned a great deal and will work better with each other on the next event because of it.

Security

Security was established for this incident on September 11, 2004. Security resources at the time consisted of FEMA personnel and 2 security guards from local private security companies. A Security Manager, 1 SEC1 and 4 additional SEC2's arrived the following day. An additional 6 security guards were retained from local services by 09/13. A transition occurred on 09/12 where the CIIMT accepted managing the Orange Co. Special Needs Shelter from FEMA.

On 09/13 a resident / patient (Mary Trotter) was reported missing by nurses. She eventually was located at a local hospital about 2 hours later in what appeared to be a miscommunication amongst the medical staff. At 2000 hrs, a fire alarm sounded in the facility. It was determined that faulty equipment had led to the false alarm.

On 09/14 at about 5 am, a female patient had a ground level fall which injured her hip. She was immediately transported to the hospital. At 0900 hrs, an Americorp crew of about 60 people arrived at the shelter to eat breakfast. They indicated they were instructed to eat at this facility by Linda Black (comptroller) and Libby Turner (federal coordinator) at the Disaster Field Office. It was unknown to the Logistics Chief that they were coming.

SEC1 Peter Pappas notified the contracting officer with the buying team of poor performance of the sub contracted local security guards. Notifications were made to the contracting company. Performance improved (for a little while).

On 09/15, at about 1430, three unidentified females attempted to enter the operations area. Two of the females actually entered the facility due to the fact that the contract guard was distracted by a personal cell phone call. Another alert guard from another company (Allied) noticed the breach and notified SECM Bob Blasi. Blasi contacted the group and escorted them from the facility.

Although this was a large, complex and not a traditional security assignment, no major incidents occurred. The CIIMT security unit integrated well with security components of FEMA, contract security and Convention Center security and met the needs of the IMT and our cooperating agencies.

Supply

Supply personnel ordered arrived on the 5th.

Orders were placed through FICC for overhead, crews and equipment. 99 percent of our orders for supplies and equipment involved the buying team. Larry's team did an outstanding job.

Supply ordering was mostly for medical type supplies. DMAT handled most all of the non-shelf medical items. Cots, hospital beds, blankets and bed pads were the bulk of our supplies. FEMA had most of these in place upon our arrival.

Communications between FEMA and the other entities took some time but were good once we found out who was doing what.

OPERATIONS

On September 12, 2004, CIIMT-1 was assigned to interface and assist with management of the Orange County, Special Needs Shelter in Orlando, Fl. The primary tasks were the tracking of patients and caregivers and assumption of all logistical and administrative functions in a Unified Command setting with the HHS - Clinical Services.

Upon arrival we found a fully functional and staffed Shelter with approximately 100 patients and caregivers operating under the leadership of FEMA. The original intent of the facility was to house approximately 8,000 souls. Hurricane Frances did not materialize as anticipated to cause the relocation of residents in its projected path. Hurricane Ivan stayed in the Gulf and did not cause problems along the western coast of Florida. The population of the shelter was less than 150 people.

The Operations section of the team was fully staffed with Operations Section Chiefs, Operations Section Chief Mentorees, Branch Directors and Division Supervisors. The Kentucky Job Corp #3 accompanied the Team from its previous assignment in Homestead, Fl.

The operation of the shelter became one of logistical support to the Medical Services and planning and implementation of an orderly closure of the facility. Members of the Operations Section filled various roles assisting the Resource Unit Leaders, Ground Support, Ordering and Receiving and Facilities. The crew was utilized in the setup and tear down of beds and cots, traffic control, decontamination of the beds and packing of miscenuluos supplies. Division Supervisors were used in such tasks as delivery of dirty laundry to Disney World for washing, delivering packages to local hospitals and delivery of patient's personal property to their residences.

The Operations Section provided a point of contact and logistical support for two Hotshot crews assigned to the Corp of Army Engineers.

What went well:

- Integration of the Operations Section into the Team's logistical and plans sections.
- Successful introduction of the 215 planning worksheet to HHS.
- Developing working relationships with various staff of HHS.
- Opportunity to be involved with other agencies in coordinating a large project.

Areas of concern- recommendations:

- With FEMA:
 - -FEMA's lack of name tags or position identifiers
 - -Understanding of ESF responsibilities.
 - -Efficiencies in delivery of goods, constant unloading and reloading- leave goods stored in trailers.
 - -How FEMA representatives interact with counterparts.
 - -Poor in briefing by FEMA, who is our first point of contact?
 - -Definitions of positions, definitions are in conflict.
 - -Safety concerns with the night shift assisting in the delivery of patients to their homes in "seedy" neighborhoods.
- With HHS:
 - -HHS counterparts did not step forward to work with Operations group.
 - -HHS employees have received no discernable training in ICS.
 - -IMT needed an orientation on the structure of HHS. Employees of HHS are very skilled and talented in their fields.
- General:
 - -Pay issues with Overtime for Federal Employees.
 - -Direct delegation of expectations.
 - -HHS employees questioned who we were and what we were doing here.

Conclusion:

- In general the Operations Section was able to assist other functions as necessary and stepped up to help as needed. We looked at this assignment as a real learning experience interfacing with other than fire agencies in a setting foreign to most of us. We are able to take advantage of the Lessons Learned interview team and provided meaningful input to their report process.

PLANNING

Upon arrival and subsequent to the Team in-briefing, the Planning Section set up a Resource Unit for tracking shelter residents next to the HHS Triage Area on the Convention Center floor. This was accomplished to facilitate information gathering during initial contact with individuals who would possibly become shelter residents. This area also became key to keeping information current on resident status that were transferred in and out of the shelter for various reasons including, but not limited to, local hospital admissions and inter-facility transfers.

Close coordination with the Teams counterparts in HHS was paramount to keeping information current and accurate. Key contacts were made and good working relationships were developed early to foster a spirit of teamwork and unity to ensure the appropriate care was extended to those under our care.

Upon arrival it was noted by CIIMT 1 staff that resident information gathering was not being coordinated and three separate agencies were using three separate forms duplicating much effort. A suggestion was made and accepted by all parties to have us develop one standard form to encompass all information needs for all agencies. This was accomplished and greatly improved the efficiency of information gathering.

Excel Spreadsheets were also developed by our staff members to assist in resident tracking. This allowed for quick reference when resident information was needed and made it easier to keep information on all residents current.

What went well:

- Coordination with FEMA and HHS in consolidated planning and development of the Incident Action Plan (IAP).
- Utilizing Operations Section personnel in resource tracking and development of tracking procedures.
- Coordination with the Florida Interagency Communications Center (FICC) in demobilization of resources and the team.

Areas of concern and recommendations:

- The current ICS209 in FAMWEB is not applicable for non-fire incidents. It would be helpful to have non-fire 209's available in FAMWEB.
- Mission tasking was not clearly given or in writing. It was difficult to develop the Incident Objectives without a clear Mission statement or Delegation of Authority. Recommend having written tasking or Delegation of Authority letters for the Incident Management Team in-briefing.

Resource Unit

The resource unit consisted of 5 check-in status recorders and 2 resource unit leaders. We covered a 24-hour time frame with 2, 12-hour shifts with 1 resource unit leader, 1 plans section chief, and 2 check-in status recorders during the night shift and the rest were day shift. We also used several DIVS and OPS also for check-in status as needed.

A check-in form was created and adopted by all agencies from the existing 3 check-in forms.

A Census List was created from the check-in forms to track all the individuals and their status. Status was kept on the following areas: residents, patients, caregivers, hospitalized, deceased, and discharged. When an individual was discharged their address, date, and time was recorded. The status numbers were gathered from this form and reported several times to several agencies throughout the day (in the beginning numbers were reported every hour on the hour).

A number system was developed to track the individual, their personal property, and their status. A triage tag was used and the serial number was placed on the personal property and on the wristband. The name and bed number were also written on the wristband.

A central check-in/discharge area was established at the single entrance area.

IRSS was not used for tracking or for the Incident Action Plan (IAPs). One IAP was created for each day (day and night shift).

Situation Unit

The Situation Unit consisting of Christie Neill SITL, Todd Edwards SITL (T), Alfie Blanch GIST and Mark Schug GIST was reactivated from the staging area in Murrieta, Ga. to the Orange County Special Needs Shelter in Orlando, Florida on September 12, 2004.

The Situation Unit began set up in a room at the Orange County Convention center on September 13, 2004. Situation Unit gathered current information on the incident and prepared ICS 209's, monitored hurricane progress and provided weather briefings and forecasts for the IAP. The Unit made numerous signs for the shelter, the PHS and other units and give updates to for numerous briefings with agency officials.

GIS Unit obtained the Convention Center CAD based floor plan. The building representative gave the GIST access to their office and plotter equipment. The unit began producing maps, organizational charts, facility layouts, evacuation routes for the shelter, and frequent updates on local weather and Hurricane Ivan's progression.

Conclusion:

This assignment was very challenging and gratifying. We developed a strong appreciation for the work that other federal, state, and local agencies provide. As other agencies learn and move toward a more unified approach to management of incidents and/or missions the efficiency and effectiveness will also increase.

Michael Dietrich
CIIMT 1 Deputy Incident Commander

Scott Vail
CIIMT 1 Incident Commander