

FOREWORD

Our customers understood that there was room for improvement in preparedness for a catastrophic disaster that would require significant Federal, Provincial, and State coordination and were very supportive of using a hurricane scenario to conduct a *Federal Response Plan* exercise. The eight States, four Provinces, FEMA Regions I and II, as well as the Federal and local governments, volunteer and private industry partners, worked together to create a realistic exercise that would meet multiple objectives for each of our customer organizations.

As experts modeled the effects of a Category 4 hurricane's impact on the infrastructure, power, telecommunications, properties and lives of the people of the Northeast, it soon became evident that thousands of lives and billions of dollars in property would be at stake if such a hurricane struck. As this *Evaluation Report* clearly shows, much information was gathered and is being used to enhance emergency preparedness capabilities in the participating organizations.

From the point of view of the Chief Evaluation Officer, RESPONSE 98 was a positive experience for exercise participants and for exercise evaluators and controllers alike. During the course of planning the exercise, a robust evaluation methodology was developed. At each exercise location there were on-site evaluators. Participating States and Provinces conducted their own evaluations, as did the primary agency for each Emergency Support Function. At the Federal level, FEMA evaluated coordination objectives. For each objective, RESPONSE 98 was designed to assess and evaluate specific expected actions, and evaluators identified points of review or questions to be answered. Standardized forms were prepared for evaluators to use, and extensive training of controllers and evaluators ensured consistency in implementation of the evaluation methodology. The emergency management community, as a result, now has a cadre of experienced and trained evaluators and controllers who can assist in future exercises.

The evaluation work of this team is found in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 of this *Evaluation Report*, while summaries of participant observations are in Chapter 5. Chapter 1 introduces and explains the RESPONSE 98 planning, scenario, evaluation, and management concepts.

I would like to particularly express my appreciation to the members of the Exercise Evaluation Group who are largely responsible for the successful development of this evaluation methodology, the evaluation plan, and training for controllers and evaluators.

Vanessa E. Quinn
Chief Evaluation Officer
RESPONSE 98

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Chapter 1

RESPONSE 98 Overview

TIMELINE

RESPONSE 98 was a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Headquarters-sponsored exercise held during the week of April 20-24, 1998. Player orientation was conducted on April 20, followed by three and a half days of exercise play on April 20-23. A “Hot Wash” evaluation session was conducted on Friday, April 24. The planned time schedule is depicted in Figure 1-1.

EXERCISE RESPONSE 98 – ACTUAL DATES				
Exercise Day 1 APR 20	Exercise Day 2 APR 21	Exercise Day 3 APR 22	Exercise Day 4 APR 23	Exercise Day 5 APR 24
SEPTEMBER 1998 – SIMULATED DATES				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7 <i>Labor Day</i>	8	9	10	11
0830-1200 Player Orientation 1200 - 1700 Exercise Play	0830 - 1700 Exercise Play	0830 - 1700 Exercise Play	0830 - 1700 Exercise Play	0800 - 1000 Hot Wash

Figure 1-1. *Exercise Timeline.*

PURPOSE

RESPONSE 98 was designed to assess and evaluate Federal, State, and local plans, policies, procedures, systems, and facilities for responding to a disaster event that impacts several States and Provinces, as well as two FEMA Regions. The Exercise provided a basis on which to evaluate the procedures that support the *Federal Response Plan* (FRP) and Regional supplements to the FRP and the integration of those procedures with emergency operational plans developed by the States located in FEMA Regions I and II.

SCENARIO

The RESPONSE 98 scenario depicted a major hurricane named Janet that developed in the Atlantic Ocean and posed a significant threat to the northeast United States and the Canadian Atlantic Provinces. Figure 1-2 shows Janet's storm track and the levels of intensity.

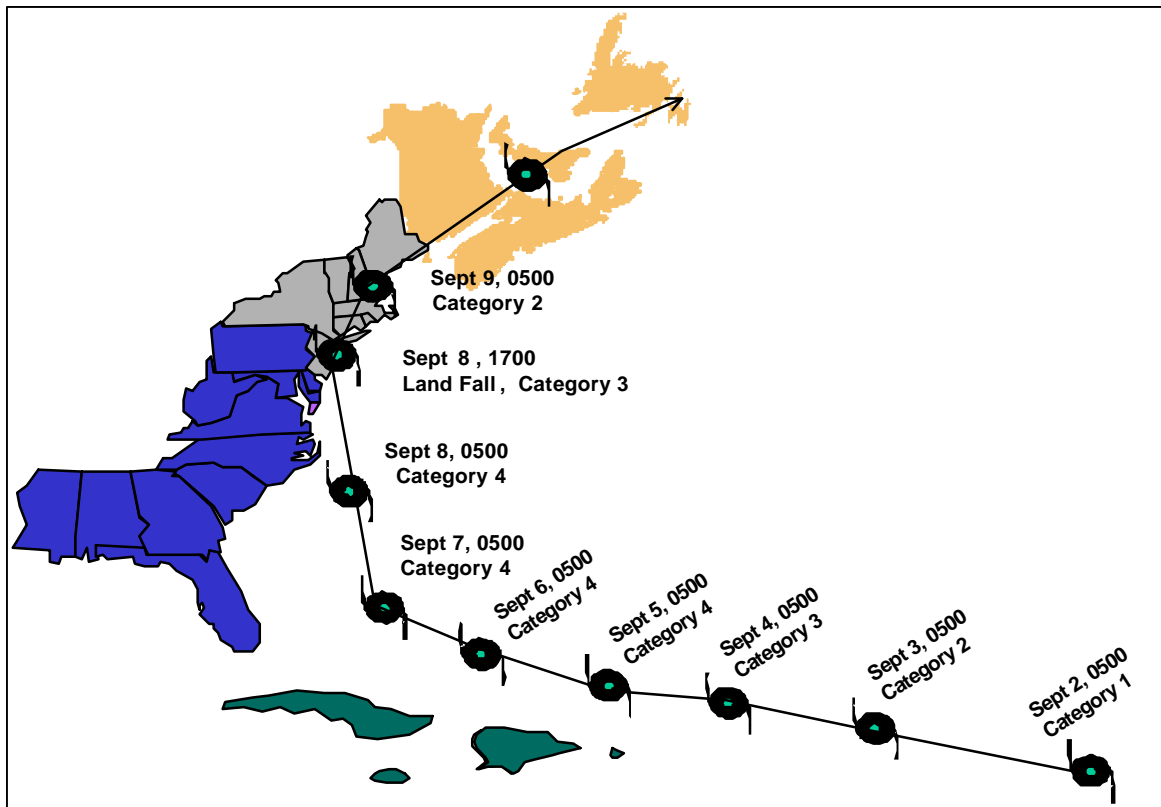


Figure 1-2. Exercise Storm Track.

PARTICIPANTS

RESPONSE 98 exercise activity occurred at the locations shown in Figure 1-3. Participation included representatives from eight States and their local communities, four Canadian Provinces, and numerous Federal departments and agencies at national and regional levels which form the Emergency Support Functions under the FRP. In FEMA Regions I and II, the Regional Operations Centers (ROCs) were activated for the exercise as were Advanced Elements of Emergency Response Teams (ERT-As) and the Mobile Air Transportable Telecommunications/Mobile Emergency Response System units. FEMA Headquarters convened the Emergency Support Team (EST) to coordinate this multi-jurisdictional exercise.

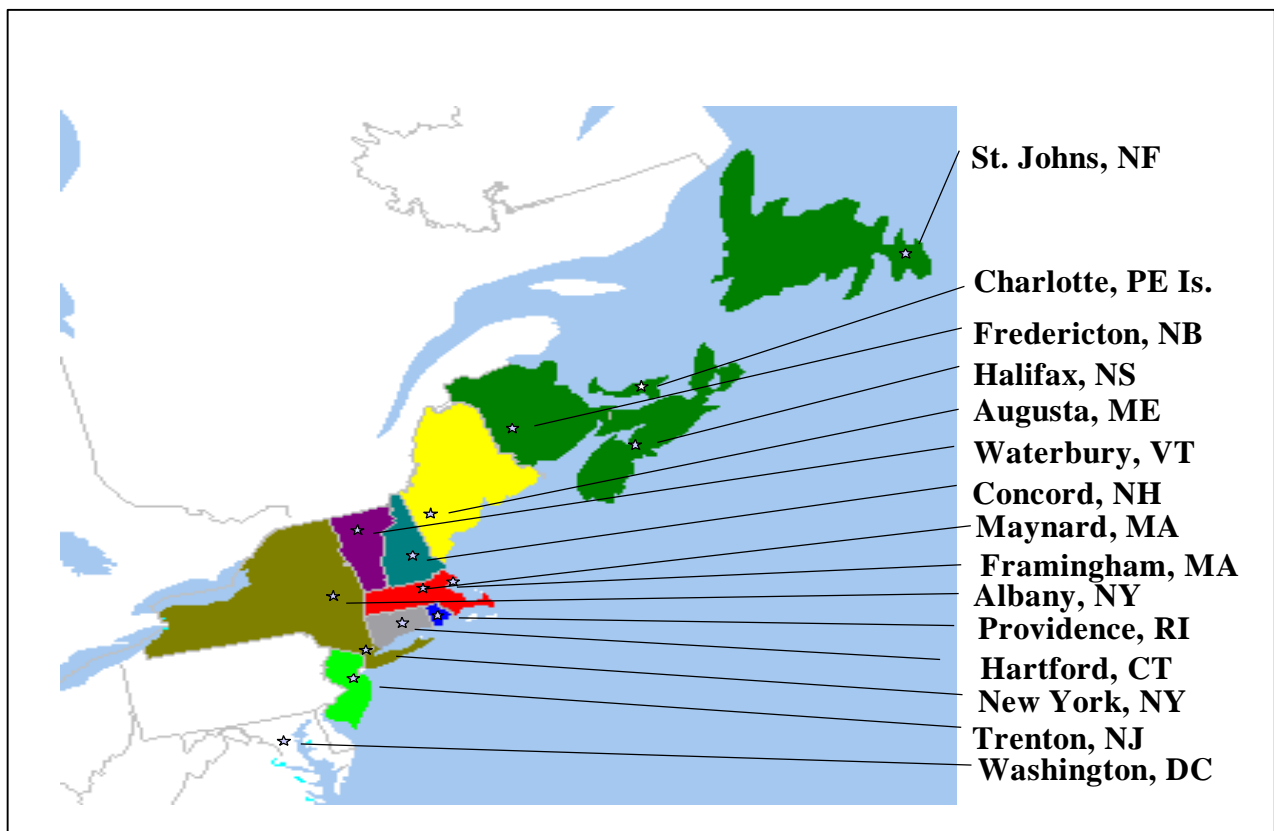


Figure 1-3. *Principal Exercise Locations.*

OBJECTIVES

RESPONSE 98 Exercise Objectives were developed jointly with participating organizations at the Federal national and regional levels, in States and Provinces, and at local levels. Table 1-1 lists the functional areas examined during the exercise from the State and local, coordination, and Federal perspective. Evaluation elements associated with the objectives focused on the specific aspects of each objective that needed to be evaluated. The evaluation methodology provided a general and widely accepted framework for organizing objectives and assessing them.

State and Local Perspective	
Assess the capability to coordinate and conduct:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> S1. Alert and Notification S2. Communications S3. Coordination and Control S4. Emergency Public Information S5. Damage Assessment S6. Health and Medical S7. Evacuation and Sheltering S8. Public Safety S9. Public Works S10. Resource Management S11. Warning
Coordination Perspective	
Assess the coordination relationships and interoperability among all levels of government to conduct:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C1. Alert and Notification C2. Activation, Staging and Mobilization/Deployment of Federal Resources C3. Coordination C4. Public Information, Media Relations, Congressional Liaison, and other Public Outreach Functions C5. Donations C6. Mitigation C7. Training C8. Financial Management C9. Emergency Response using new Plans and Procedures
Federal Perspective	
Assess the capability to provide resources and support using the <i>Federal Response Plan</i> and its regional supplements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESF1. Transportation ESF2. Communications ESF3. Public Works and Engineering ESF4. Firefighting ESF5. Information and Planning ESF6. Mass Care ESF7. Resource Support ESF8. Health and Medical Services ESF9. Urban Search and Rescue ESF10. Hazardous Materials ESF11. Food ESF12. Energy

Table 1-1. *Index of Categories and Functional Areas for Exercise Objectives.*

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

RESPONSE 98 was evaluated at all exercise locations through the use of on-site evaluators. The participating States conducted their own evaluations of the State and Local objectives at the State locations. The primary agency for each ESF evaluated its respective ESF objectives in Washington, D.C., and in the two participating Regions. FEMA evaluated the coordination perspective objectives at all locations.

Exercise play in RESPONSE 98 was designed to assess and evaluate specific aspects of response to the catastrophic hurricane scenario depicted in this exercise. In designing the exercise, response organizations identified the actions needed in the exercise to accomplish evaluation objectives. The storm track and supporting scenario were built to trigger most of these actions in exercise play. The remainder was triggered by Master Scenarios Events List (MSEL) items created for this purpose.

For each of the expected actions, evaluators identified “points-of-review” questions for evaluators to answer about what happened during exercise play. Evaluators were provided standardized forms on which to record observations. During exercise play, evaluators recorded information about actual play and the ways in which it differed from what was expected, as well as answered points-of-review questions to collect data needed for post-exercise analysis. Additionally, all exercise participants had an opportunity for individual input to the evaluation by completing the observation/comment forms and survey forms, and via formal critique comments. All major agencies used this methodology to evaluate their objective areas and to provide input to this *Exercise Evaluation Report* (EER).

Following the exercise, the Evaluation Team Chiefs from each major location were tasked with developing an initial EER from the data collected by the evaluators. This information was then collected at FEMA Headquarters (HQ) for consolidation into the final EER report.

An Exercise Evaluation Group (EEG), Figure 1-4, was established for evaluation planning and management. The Chief Evaluation Officer was Ms. Vanessa E. Quinn, of the Evaluation and Corrective Actions Branch of FEMA’s Exercise Division. Evaluators were assigned at each major exercise location; all three evaluation perspectives were represented. One of the evaluators at each site was designated as the Evaluation Team Chief.

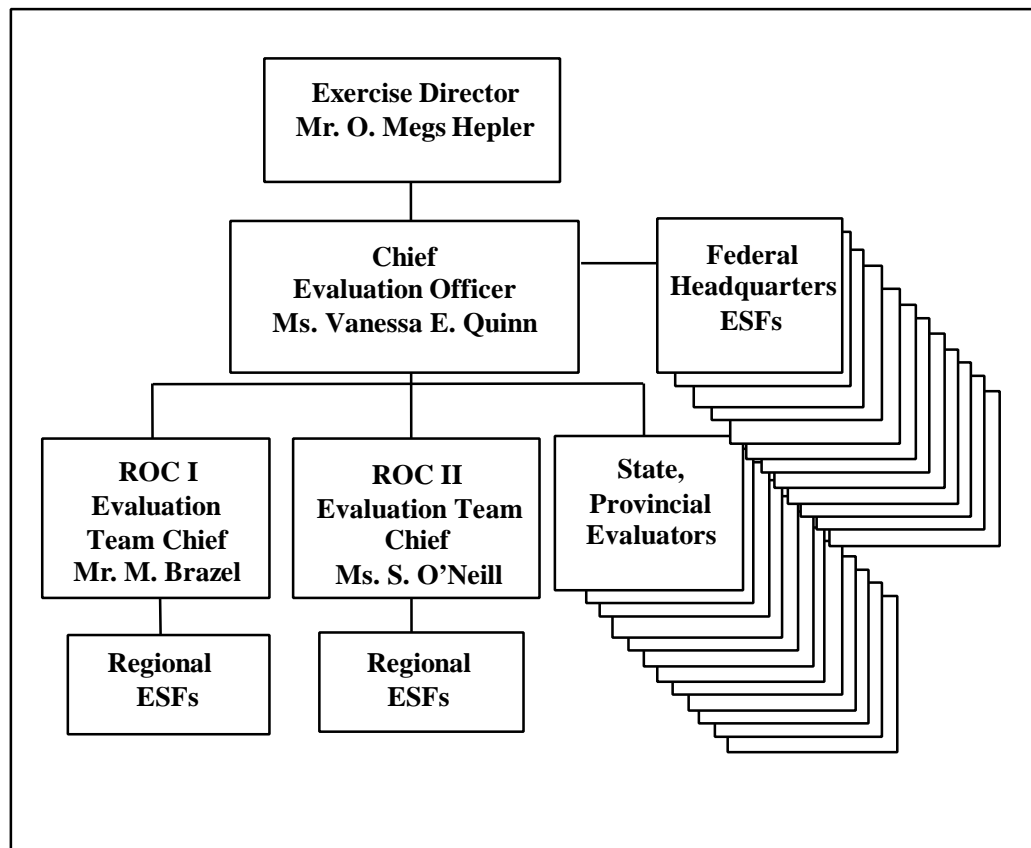


Figure 1-4. *Exercise Evaluation Group.*

OVERALL EXERCISE MANAGEMENT AND DOCUMENTATION

For details about the overall management of the RESPONSE 98 exercise, its control and simulation, and the planning and design efforts, please refer to appropriate documents described below:

- *Concept and Objectives.* Established the initial parameters for the conduct of the exercise, including the focus of the evaluation efforts.
- *Exercise Plan.* This document identified the scope and concept of play for all players; identified key exercise assumptions, artificialities, and simulations; established the scenario narrative consisting of weather and other background information leading to the start of the exercise; and provided exercise objectives and evaluation elements. The *Exercise Plan* also explained procedural aspects of exercise play, the role of controllers and evaluators, and the administrative

and support requirements and procedures governing play of the exercise. The *Exercise Plan* incorporates the Concept and Objectives Paper.

- *Evaluation Plan*. This document expanded on the methodology contained in the *Exercise Plan*, giving more detailed instructions to the evaluators on their responsibilities before, during, and after the exercise.
- *Master Scenario Events List* with Implementers. This document was used by controllers to manage the exercise. It ensured controllers knew when events were expected to occur and when to insert event implementer messages into the exercise. Implementer messages were designed to prompt exercise play required to achieve exercise objectives.
- *Control Staff Instructions*. This document provided controllers and simulators with guidance concerning procedures and responsibilities for exercise control, simulation, and support. It explained the exercise concept as it related to controllers and simulators; established the basis for control and simulation of the exercise; and established and defined the communications, logistics, and administrative structure needed to support control and simulation during the exercise.
- *Player's Handbook*. This document provided players with exercise-specific information and procedures they would need to participate in the exercise.
- *Communications Directory*. This contained telephone numbers of key exercise players and locations.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Exercise RESPONSE 98 included the largest mix of FEMA's customer base of any exercise attempted to date. In addition to Federal, State and local government personnel, volunteer organizations from the Salvation Army to local fire departments and private industry, including Wall Street bankers and local and regional telephone companies, were actively engaged. The partnerships that were developed through the planning process and fostered during the conduct of the exercise will pay dividends for years to come in improved emergency management.

While featuring a catastrophic hurricane hitting the northeast coast, the exercise was designed to meet the multiple objectives of each participant group and provide a valid test of their combined capabilities. Its applicability is valid for any natural disaster.

In addition, the planning and preparation for the exercise yielded its own dividends. When the winter ice storms of 1998 struck the northeastern United States and Canada, States and regions were able to use the plans, contacts, and procedures that had been created in preparation for RESPONSE 98. According to State emergency management officials, "this was a decisive factor in the speed and success of their response to the ice storm crisis."

State and Local Perspective

In addition to the benefits gleaned during the winter ice storms, States and local communities were able to exercise their emergency management procedures, test vital routine and emergency communications procedures, and perform numerous tests of recently modified procedures for dealing with a catastrophic event. The opportunity to interrelate with the various department, agency and volunteer groups that are standing by to support relief and requests for assistance validated, and in some cases identified, improved procedures within the various jurisdictions. One State was able to identify an equipment incompatibility with that being used by the National Weather Service. Corrective measures will have a profound effect on the alert and warning effectiveness of that State. The actual deployment of an Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Team to Manchester, New Hampshire, increased realism and afforded an opportunity that benefited both the US&R Team and community rescue teams. Conversely, the exercise highlighted the overwhelming demand for US&R assets in a very large-scale disaster.

The exercise demonstrated that plans should to be developed for the following:

- State-to-State mutual aid agreements need to be developed for all States to provide a mechanism to use other State's assets.
- Both mechanisms and procedures are needed to make use of foreign US&R assets.
- For both the State-to-State and international US&R assistance, funding issues need to be resolved to minimize delays in acquiring other assets when needed.
- Donations Management procedures for a catastrophic disaster need additional work.

Coordination Perspective

States' capabilities vary widely in the use of Geographical Information System (GIS) capabilities. Some States are on the leading edge of GIS analysis and are self-sufficient. FEMA's Mitigation Directorate has distributed a software product named *MapInfo* to each State. Unfortunately, not all State mitigation planners are part of the exercise or disaster response teams, and some States do not have access to any GIS support.

Despite the planning and advanced training, few States or regions were able to fully utilize the GIS reports that were distributed by FEMA. In some cases, there were equipment failures. In others, several days passed before State and regional personnel were able to familiarize themselves with the GIS software in order to customize data for their specific needs. In other cases, the information was not distributed to the State organizations that understood and normally make use of the data. GIS model predictions can be critical in determining evacuation routes and in other pre-event planning for disasters such as hurricanes.

Specifically, the key points are:

- GIS modeling will become more important to the emergency management community as models improve. GIS seems to be used primarily by mitigation organizations. Response and recovery organizations must also be trained on its benefits and use.
- FEMA's GIS models need to be revalidated. If accurate, they should have wider distribution, and if inaccurate, they must be replaced.

The Department of Transportation used Exercise RESPONSE 98 as an opportunity to test events and procedures for strengthening Movement Coordination Center operations. Significant results included:

- Provided inputs to complete Concept of Operations Plan.
- Allowed testing of the database under operational conditions.
- Tested and developed instructions for using an Internet-based information system.



Figure 1-5. *Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Data.*

Federal Perspective

Although all ESFs interacted well and satisfied the needs of the States, documented standard operating procedures and checklists would have enhanced their ability and streamlined many activities in the regions.

The initial EST play was limited to a low-level response cell. The demands of the exercise, including intense play with two Regions and their respective States, required escalation of EST involvement. The full EST was not brought into the exercise until the third day of play. This created confusion in the EST as to their role, and may have confused the Regions as to what transpired. Because of the limited initial commitment by Headquarters staff for the exercise, the EST did not take full advantage of a significant learning opportunity for catastrophic disaster planning. Future exercises should be used as an opportunity to examine and develop areas that are known to present problems. For example, the idea for creating a Housing Task Force as a way to adjudicate extraordinary housing requirements in a large disaster, especially across multiple regions, appears to be a good concept that should be developed further.

The Regions expected the EST to set up the Mobilization Centers in this exercise, and the EST assumed that the Regions were setting up the centers. Procedures for selecting a location for, setting up, and staffing the Mobilization Centers need to be developed and standardized. The EST noted that the exercise clearly required activation of resource allocation and adjudication mechanisms among the ROCs, the ERTs, and the EST, that could be appealed to the Catastrophic Disaster Response Group.

The exercise demonstrated the potential value of the Emergency Management Assistance Compacts, as well as highlighted how limited FEMA's resources are in the field. If another major disaster had occurred during this period, most of the regional resources would have already been committed, and perhaps have been unable to staff for another major disaster.

Chapters 2 through 4 of this report provide details about specific objectives and activity during the exercise.

Chapter 2

Evaluation From The State and Local Perspective

As mentioned in Chapter 1, objectives categorized under eleven different functional areas were chosen by State and local participants as critical to the smooth functioning of their emergency preparedness organizations. These areas were examined during RESPONSE 98 using an evaluation methodology that first required identification of the item to be exercised and its evaluation element along with criteria for judging success. In this Chapter, the areas and evaluation elements listed in Table 1-1 under State and Local Perspective will be presented in some detail, along with the findings of evaluators during RESPONSE 98.

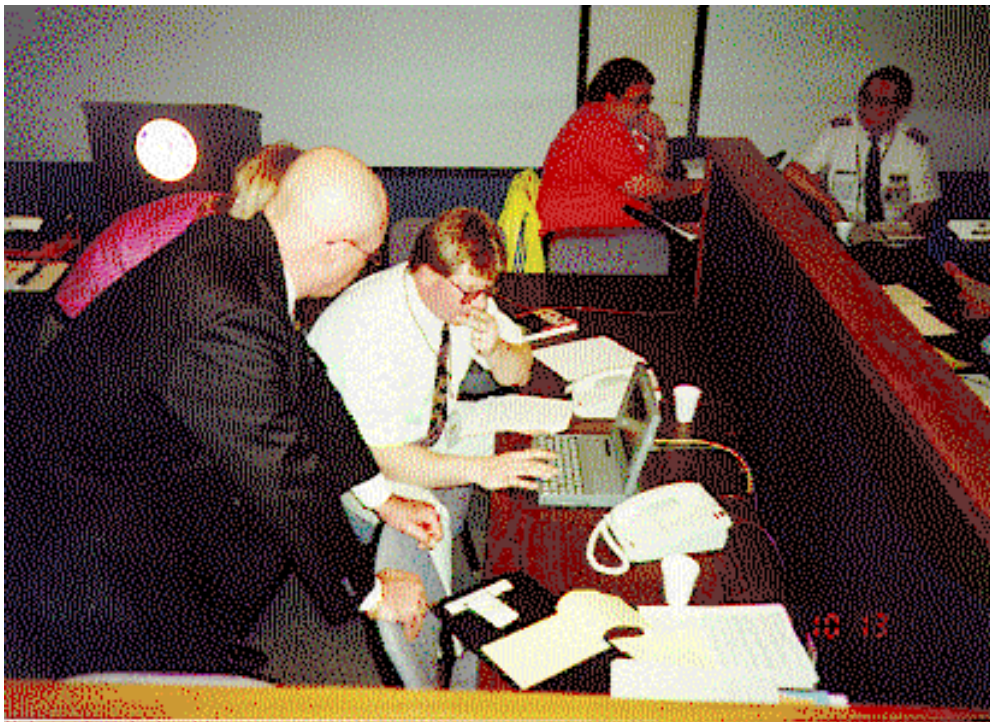


Figure 2-1. *Activation of State and Local Community
Emergency Operations Centers.*

ALERT AND NOTIFICATION

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency response and recovery activities for alert and notification

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the ability to interface with Federal, State, and local counterparts during the watch and warning phases of a hurricane.

- **Finding** – As the exercise Hurricane Janet moved north, the States and localities in FEMA Regions I and II began to prepare for the potential impact of the storm. In Region II, the State of New Jersey was the first to activate its Office of Emergency Management (OEM) on day one of the exercise, based on the span of warning or watches and the projected hurricane path. New Jersey notified both the State of New York and FEMA Region II, and New York activated its Emergency Management Office (EMO). Simultaneously, FEMA Region II deployed State Liaison Officers to New York and New Jersey, followed by the deployment of Emergency Response Team Advance Element (ERT-A) teams to Trenton, NJ, and Albany, NY, and activated the Regional Operations Center (ROC). Situation briefings, conference calls, and face-to-face meetings were held to coordinate resources and exchange operational information at all locations. The Region II ROC informed Region I of the ROC activation.

In Region I, Connecticut was the first state to activate its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) on day two of the exercise, as Hurricane Janet continued to move north, up the East Coast of the United States. Region I deployed a State liaison to Connecticut and activated its ROC. As each State EOC was activated, State liaisons were deployed by the Region I ROC to three States in the region.

- **Evaluation Element** – Determine the ability of State EOCs to coordinate with the National Weather Service (NWS).
- **Finding** – Information about Hurricane Janet was available from the National Weather Service Regional Offices and the National Hurricane Center. Additionally, weather forecasts and hurricane warnings and watches were received from the FEMA Region II ROC, New York State Emergency Management Office (NYSEMO), and simulated news broadcasts. The combinations of weather information allowed ERT-A teams located in New Jersey and New York to monitor and track Hurricane Janet.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts experienced difficulties receiving timely weather information from the NWS. The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) received weather data from the Region I ROC via fax instead of established communications links with the NWS. The standard operating procedures used by FEMA Headquarters and the NWS to identify and access weather links should be distributed to the States and Regions.

COMMUNICATIONS

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency response for communications services

- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to establish and maintain communications essential to support response on several levels: Local to State EOC; State EOC to State staging area; State EOC to ROC; State EOC to Federal Mobilization Center; and State staging area to Federal Mobilization Center.
- **Finding** – In Regions I and II, agency representatives established and maintained essential communications to State EOCs, staging areas, local EOCs, the ROC, and the Federal Mobilization Centers. The ERT-As stayed in continuous contact with the ROCs throughout the exercise.

In Connecticut, the use of emergency management radio systems and amateur radio operators provided town coverage to area offices and from area offices to State EOCs. A communications check from the Connecticut EOC to the Region I ROC, using both voice and data, was completed using FEMA National Radio System (FNARS) and a successful radio check was completed with New Hampshire. It was also established that the Connecticut EOC could implement the FNARS system to contact the Federal Mobilization Center in Westover.

- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the methods of communications between the EOC's response forces, if employed; shelter/lodging/feeding facilities; adjacent jurisdictions; and outside assistance agencies.
- **Finding** – The primary means of communications used by most States and Federal agencies (Regional/National) for personnel located in the EOCs, ROCs, and the Emergency Support Team (EST) was landline telephones with conferencing and facsimile capabilities. Cellular telephones were used by elements deployed to remote sites during the exercise. As Hurricane Janet moved up the East Coast and disrupted the primary communications, alternate communications such as HF radios and FNARS were utilized to maintain the flow of information from local and State EOCs and ERT-A teams to the ROCs. In addition to the various types of phones and radios, the internet provided an increased capability to communicate through teleconferencing and video conferencing.
- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively with all appropriate emergency response locations, organizations, and personnel.
- **Finding** – Communications between the State EOCs and the ROCs were very effective. Incident reports, damage assessments, and resource requirements were forwarded from the local level, through the State, to the regions so the Federal response could be coordinated and executed. Each of the States conducted

communications testing to assure adequate and redundant systems were operational.

- **Evaluation Element** – Determine Vermont’s ability to receive status reports from other States.
 - **Finding** – Vermont’s ability to receive status reports from other States was unobstructed.

COORDINATION AND CONTROL

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency control response for coordination and control

- **Evaluation Element** – Address increased readiness operations and describe actions to be taken by the State, county, local governments, and the private sector during periods of heightened risk.
 - **Finding** – As the probability that Hurricane Janet would have an impact on the New Jersey shoreline and north increased, additional personnel were placed on stand-by, and supplies and equipment were pre-positioned in the States. The ERT-As and the response organizations demonstrated knowledge of increased readiness operations by issuing Situation Reports.

In New York City, efforts are underway to develop an evacuation plan for the city. Over the next few months, the city plans to hold several meetings to initiate the development of this plan. Initially, the meeting participants will include New York City police, fire, and Office of Emergency Management personnel. Additional planning sessions will be held to coordinate with pertinent State and Federal agencies that would play a key role in the evacuation of New York City.

- **Evaluation Element** – Provide security in evacuated and restricted access areas.
 - **Finding** – Security was provided in evacuated and restricted areas by State and Federal emergency response organizations in the areas affected by the hurricane. Master Scenario Events List events allowed testing of local plans to address these evacuation issues.
- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate direction and control capabilities through "paperless" technologies and data distribution networks.
 - **Finding** – The MEMA is in the process of developing a system that would implement “paperless” technologies to direct and control emergency response

capabilities. Some integration of “paperless technologies” was apparent; however, the major emphasis is still paper dependent.

- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to identify the need for and request emergency assistance from Federal and other support agencies.
- **Finding** – The State of New York identified requirements for emergency assistance from Federal agencies early in the exercise. The NYSEMO worked with the ERT-A and the Region II ROC to coordinate with agencies such as the American Red Cross to monitor the evacuation of areas affected by the storm and the sheltering of people. Additionally, Emergency Support Function 5 (ESF-5) coordinated with the Red Cross to provide the FEMA Director with a list of open shelters and information on shelter availability in New York. As the scenario developed and resource requirements were identified, assets were delivered to the State. For example, ESF-7 received a request from the NYSEMO to locate 300,000 cots; 600,000 blankets; and 900,000 Meals-Ready-to-Eat. This information was promptly relayed to the ROC to begin the resource coordination process.

The New York State Plan should consider all potential resource requests to avoid large shortfalls and unnecessary delays in any future emergencies such as the one portrayed by the magnitude of Hurricane Janet. A possible consideration is to develop a pre-disaster Initial Response Resources (IRR) list as baseline for resource requests.

EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and provide pertinent emergency public information

- **Evaluation Element** – Coordinate the release of information to the public by any agency or organization through the State public information officer.
- **Finding** – The States issued press releases daily through both the Governor’s Office and the EMOs to provide pertinent emergency public information. In New York, press releases were issued on Governor Pataki’s declaration of a State of Emergency in New York. Brochures on the following topics were made available: Hurricane Safety Tips, Emergency Sheltering Information, A Request that Consumers Not Be Gouged for Unfair Prices, and the Dangers of Hurricane Debris. Additionally, the State also distributed a brochure to shelter, food and water distribution sites about hurricane cleanup and safety procedures.

- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the capability of coordinating and disseminating accurate information regarding an incident to the media and the public in a timely manner.
- **Finding** – When situation reports became available, the Public Information Officers (PIOs) in the States and at the ROCs rapidly disseminated the information to the public. Hurricane Janet caused widespread catastrophic damage to the northeastern coast. In such a situation, the State PIO (who was supported by the ERT-A PIO) would normally be replaced by the FEMA Region II PIO and Headquarters representatives, but exercise play did not continue long enough for the transition to take place. Nevertheless, generating the material to be used for the Situation Report is the responsibility of the ERT-A PIO. The ERT-A Team Leader is responsible for information that is released to the ROC. When public information is released, it is sent to FEMA Headquarters, which has the capability to disseminate the information quickly to many news organizations.

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency response for initial damage assessment

- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to mobilize and implement rapid assessment capabilities.
- **Finding** – The New Jersey response organization and the Rapid Assessment Team (RAT) mobilized the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJ-DOT) maintenance field personnel to perform an immediate, preliminary damage assessment on all State highways and bridges. As Hurricane Janet passed, RATs were in place to provide rapid assessment.

In Connecticut, the State Departments of Environmental Protection, Health, Public Works; the Department of Transportation; the Civil Air Patrol (CAP); and the Connecticut National Guard (Lead Agency) were assigned to the Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) Teams. The National Guard supplied helicopters for transport of the RNA Teams to disaster areas. The RNA Teams identified the needs of the victims (e.g., food, water, medical supplies, etc.).

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the collection, display, and reporting of damage information in the State EOC.
- **Finding** – In New Jersey, local and county damage was reported to local aid personnel and relayed to the Trenton Emergency Control Center (TECC). The collection of damage information was accomplished via radio communications and

telephone or fax, if functional to the TECC. The TECC consolidated incoming information and relayed it to the State Police EOC through the NJ-DOT to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), FEMA, and State Coordinators. The staff from the NJ-DOT, Division of Aeronautics and Freight Systems, coordinated a damage assessment of aviation facilities. FHWA notified FEMA via action-tracking forms.

Cost estimates provided were based on existing contract prices, historical costs, and inventory costs on file at NJ-DOT. Assessment information was stored at the NJ-DOT in computer files. Job Numbers were established to track damage repair at each site.

- **Evaluation Element** – Damage Assessment Model.
 - **Finding** – The Consequence Assessment Tool Sets (CATS) model provided information about the severity of the structural damage Hurricane Janet would cause using data provided by the National Weather Service. Therefore, the ERT-A knew to expect a grave situation and had an indication of what kind of structural damage could be expected. It also provided an estimate of needed resources. However, the system did not differentiate between commercial buildings and residential structures, so the number of people affected could not be realistically estimated. The CATS system was not used until late in the exercise.
- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to perform damage assessment reports.
 - **Finding** – The NYSEMO manager served as the State counterpart to the ERT-A team leader and was responsible for the reporting of damages to FEMA. The New York State Agencies Infrastructure Branch provided information on damage assessment to ESF-3.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency response for health and medical services

- **Evaluation Element** – Exercise of Disaster Mortuary Teams (DMORTs) and Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMATs) in support of emergency operations.
- **Finding** – The DMORT and DMAT were used to support operations in New York. The facilities used in support of these teams were pre-identified in the State *Emergency Response Plan*.

The impact of Hurricane Janet as it moved through the New York coastal areas and the previous flooding from a separate storm cell was overwhelming to New York.

The DMORT and DMAT resources were not sufficient to support all emergency operations in New York. This finding led to a discussion with the NYSEMO manager about what needed to be done to bring in teams from other parts of the country.

A question was raised as to whether Urban Search and Rescue Teams should have been moved into place prior to landfall, since the potential for extensive damage was known before Hurricane Janet hit.



Figure 2-2. *Urban Search and Rescue Team.*

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the ability to activate crisis counseling through Health and Human Services.
 - **Finding** – Crisis counseling was activated in New York through the Department of Health and Human Services. The situation in New York City was complex because of the multiplicity of cultures in the city: counselors would be required to perform using eighteen different languages.
- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the ability of applicable State agencies to implement procedures to identify, evacuate, or shelter at-risk populations (personnel, clients, inmates, patients, and wards).
 - **Finding** – The New York response organization implemented procedures to identify, evacuate, and shelter at-risk populations in fixed facilities. These procedures were in the response organization’s emergency operations plan, and the sheltering and evacuation efforts were coordinated with other agencies. A long-term housing strategy was discussed, but the exercise ended prior to any implementation.
- **Evaluation Element** – Determine the statewide capabilities to respond to and recover from a natural disaster.

- **Finding** – New Jersey had statewide capabilities in place to respond to and recover from a natural disaster. Procedures for health and medical services were included in the State’s emergency response plan. Hospitals in New Jersey have plans describing their capabilities and listing nurses, doctors, EMA, and para-medical personnel available.

EVACUATION AND SHELTERING

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency assistance response for evacuation and sheltering

- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the adequacy of State donations management procedures.
- **Finding** – New Jersey donations management procedures were up-to-date but were not used during the exercise.

The State of New York lacks plans and procedures for mass feeding, sheltering, and donations management. The State encountered this same issue during the ice storm. No decisions were made by the State of New York to remedy this during the exercise.

In Connecticut, the National Guard was initially tasked to be the lead agency for donated food, but the Guard had other duties and could not comply. Therefore, a recommendation was made that the lead agency for donated food be a non-profit organization. Another recommendation was that the States in Region I attend the Emergency Management Institute’s State Donations Management Course and possibly develop a strategic donations management plan for the entire Region.

- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to establish and operate local distribution centers for bottled water, plastic roof sheeting, etc.
- **Finding** – Local distribution centers for bottled water, plastic roof sheeting, etc., were established at the locations pre-designated in the emergency response plan.
- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to establish mass feeding operations.
- **Finding** – Mass feeding was only established at shelter locations. Feeding requests were received and food was ordered through the United States Department of Agriculture. The American Red Cross (ARC), in coordination with the State Department of Human Resources, was responsible for managing these operations and coordinated with the procedures in the regional sheltering plans. There were inadequate resources at the mass feeding locations to address the needs of the

hurricane victims. The State agencies applied past experience to implement feeding for mass care, but the magnitude of the disaster and the size of the impacted population appeared to surprise State players. The lack of New York State updated plans and procedures addressing feeding strategies required additional work on the part of the ERT-A to determine resource needs.

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate capability for production and distribution of potable water.
 - **Finding** – New Jersey demonstrated the ability to produce and distribute potable water, which was accomplished at the county level. The State-established, pre-determined potable water distribution sites were identified in the response plan.
- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the capability of procedures, facilities, equipment and personnel for the care of evacuees.
 - **Finding** – The ARC, volunteer agencies, and local organizations in New Jersey were in charge of providing for evacuees, and they demonstrated the ability to provide appropriate facilities, equipment, and personnel for the care of evacuees. An adequate facility was pre-designated as a mass care center to support emergency operations. 1,651,000 spaces were listed as available, and a total of 779,300 beds were in use in 21 counties.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency response for public safety activities

- **Evaluation Element** – Identify coastal and inland areas vulnerable to storm surge inundation associated with hurricanes and tropical storms; develop and implement protective actions for those areas.
 - **Finding** – The States and the Region I ROC do not have Sea, Lake and Overland Surges from Hurricanes modeling capability. The Hazards United States model is available at the Region I Headquarters in Boston, but was unavailable at the ROC.

Many Emergency Responders and Managers outside of ESF-5 do not know what Geographical Information System (GIS) data are available. It was recommended that an information session be planned to communicate the GIS capabilities and standards to all of the ESFs and ROC staff in Region I.

- **Evaluation Element** – Assessment of personnel needs and coordination of law enforcement and fire/rescue.

- **Finding** – In New Jersey, each municipality has fire, law enforcement, and emergency medical systems. They work from the bottom up on response so that a local unit responds first and then the county. If the county cannot respond, it requests State help. Because the local levels were not playing at the same time as the State during this exercise, the State was not overwhelmed with requests for assistance. The State participants tried to provide realistic State and Federal play for this exercise, but a true assessment of what law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical needs would be for the entire State did not occur. The State plan calls for deployment of a State EOC liaison officer in each of the 21 counties following a major disaster. The State EOC did not deploy in the exercise but would have forwarded any requests for assistance to the State government in the event of a “real-world” incident.

The State of New York EOC manager discussed with the local EOC managers needs for additional personnel to handle law enforcement and fire/rescue, including the Mutual Aid Plan with sister States to provide additional National Guard, State Troopers, etc. During the discussions, the FEMA ERT-A Team Leader informed State agencies that FEMA does not provide law enforcement. An observation made was that the State of New York lacks updated plans and procedures in this functional area.

PUBLIC WORKS

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency response for public works activities

- **Evaluation Element** – Exercise the capability to manage debris removal and disposal.
- **Finding** – When States requested Federal assistance in debris removal, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was assigned the mission. State staff could benefit from planning and training on debris management. The ERT-A team had difficulty receiving sufficient information to identify emergency routes blocked by debris so help could be provided.

Mutual aid agreements exist among the New Jersey Public Works, Highway Systems, DOT, and transit authorities. State priority was given to major transportation routes. To carry this out, the State’s Department of Environmental Protection selected and identified debris staging areas. Debris management plans exist, although some are in draft, that outline debris separation policy, but the information was not transmitted to the public. The debris separation policy should be a flag item for TV, radio, and press during media briefings. Additional planning and training may be needed for some State staff.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency response for resource management activities

- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to manage State marshalling and staging area operations.
 - **Finding** – New Jersey produced a list of potential staging areas, but the procedures for managing the staging areas and deployment operations were not demonstrated by New York or New Jersey.
- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to distribute Initial Response Resource (IRR) packages.
 - **Finding** – The Connecticut National Guard is the lead agency for receiving and for distributing IRR packages. The State staging area is located at the Air Guard Unit in Bradley, Connecticut, where military truck and heavy airlift would be used to move items onward to area staging locations.
- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate Resource Management Control through "paperless" technologies and data distribution networks.
 - **Finding** – There was limited direction and control via “paperless technologies.” It was recommended that Massachusetts and Maine continue to integrate and use these technologies to enhance the system.
- **Evaluation Element** – Assess the capability to monitor and respond to the local requests for resources.
 - **Finding** – The ERT-A used Action Tracking and Mission Assignment Logs to track and monitor resources requested by the State and had excellent interface with State agencies.
- **Evaluation Element** – Determine the effectiveness of procedures for requesting resources from a higher level of government and incorporate the Emergency Support Function.
 - **Finding** – Prior to a declaration of a disaster under the Stafford Act, the State requested ERT-A and ROC assistance. After the Presidential Declaration, the States used the Request for Federal Assistance procedures. The procedure for FEMA is to validate mission needs with appropriate State agencies. Because State agency players participated during the exercise in a limited manner, the ERT-A team had difficulty gathering pertinent information from the State to be efficient in providing the support resources needed.

The State of New Jersey did not prioritize resource needs prior to requesting Federal resource assistance. The ESF that requested the resources was responsible for ensuring the proper resources were delivered to the appropriate State response

personnel. It is recommended that States prioritize resource needs before passing them to the Federal level. In addition, the exercise artificiality of State agencies not participating at the same time as the local and Federal participants needs to be corrected.

WARNING

Objective

Demonstrate the capability to coordinate and conduct pertinent emergency response for warning

- **Evaluation Element** – Assess the ability to coordinate with media and the National Weather Service to provide advanced warning and situational updates to the public.
- **Finding** – The State response organizations coordinated warning and situational update information with the FEMA Public Information Officer (PIO) prior to its dissemination to the media and the public. Additionally, information was coordinated with other organizations prior to disseminating it to the media. Advance warning and situational update information came from the National Weather Service.

In the State of New Jersey, all levels of government were involved in the dissemination of warning information. Once there is a need to alert the public, the State EOC (State Police) informs the Governor's Office. The warning notice is prepared by the State PIO and concurred on by the Governor's PIO. The State PIO coordinates all warning notifications with the county governments prior to releasing them to the media. The States and counties received daily reports from the National Weather Service.

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Chapter 3

Evaluation from the Coordination Perspective

In this Chapter, the RESPONSE 98 Exercise objectives found under the coordination perspective in Table 1-1 are presented with their evaluation elements and the findings made by the evaluation team. Items C7 and C9 in Table 1-1 were not covered in this exercise. State and local entities during the exercise addressed many coordination issues. Some of these were also addressed in the previous chapter, especially in the discussions regarding resources staging and public information. When evaluators find the same situations and report them from more than one viewpoint, these become areas of special concern to the emergency planners, who are undertaking corrective actions on the basis of RESPONSE 98 findings.

ALERT AND NOTIFICATION

Objective

Assess the coordination relationships and interoperability among all levels of government to conduct emergency response alert and notification

- **Evaluation Element** – Assess the coordination relationships and interoperability among all levels of government to conduct emergency response alert and notification.
- **Finding** – Because of the threat from Hurricane Janet moving north along the East Coast of the United States, the Emergency Support Team (EST) at FEMA headquarters was activated to monitor the storm. The EST and the Regions I and II Regional Operating Centers (ROCs) were activated prior to the start of the exercise.



Figure 3-1. ROC I Staff Members.

When the Emergency Operations Center, Office Of Emergency Management, and the Emergency Management Organizations were activated, liaisons from the Regions were deployed to the States, and the Federal, Regional, and State Response Plans were activated. Region II deployed Emergency Response Team-Advance Element (ERT-As) to Albany, New York, and Trenton, New Jersey. Region I deployed an ERT-A to Connecticut. The ROCs in Regions I and II have up-to-date telephone and pager listings to use for alert and notification. Personnel rosters were not prepared for 24-hour staffing, since the exercise was played during 8-hour days.

ACTIVATION, STAGING AND MOBILIZATION/DEPLOYMENT OF FEDERAL RESOURCES

Objective

Assess the coordination relationships and interoperability among all levels of government to conduct Activation, Staging, and Mobilization/Deployment of Federal resources

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the ability and effectiveness of State and local governments' emergency plans to develop emergency disaster resource requirements prior to an imminent Federal disaster declaration.
- **Finding** – In Regions I and II, initial mission assignments were prepared and issued to all Emergency Support Functions (ESFs). As the exercise progressed, task-specific mission assignments were issued, as appropriate.

It was apparent from the start of the exercise that Hurricane Janet would pose a significant threat with widespread damage throughout both regions. The exercise identified the importance of coordination among the affected Regions, States, and FEMA Headquarters before, during, and after a storm of Hurricane Janet's magnitude.

Requests for resources were generated by the States, forwarded to the ROC, and acted on without consideration of the resource availability. One example was the request for Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) assets. New Jersey and New York were the first states to request US&R teams. A day before the hurricane hit land, both States experienced storm damage, flooding, and wind damage, which overwhelmed local and State responders. This prompted requests for Federal US&R teams. Considering the projected storm path and predicted damage in many of the older urban areas in Regions I and II, a determination of available US&R resources needed to be made and a procedure put in place to deploy these resources effectively to the areas of greatest need. The States and Regions should consider executing Mutual Aid Agreements with other States and Regions for US&R resources. While the EST is gathering information on damage and projecting needs for resources based on reports from the regions and States, as

well as from predictive modeling, a procedure needs to be established to ensure that deployment of resources is consistent.

- **Evaluation Element** – Participate in the selection of staging areas.
 - **Finding** – In Region II, the ESF-1 representative on the ERT-A and representatives from the State of New York participated in the selection of staging areas. The criteria for staging areas focused on whether the location was out of the path of the storm, along with its ability to receive, account for, and achieve secure distribution to the affected areas in the region.
- **Evaluation Element** – Examine the Department of Defense’s (DoD’s) procedures to coordinate the provision of disaster support to local, State, and Federal agencies prior to and after a Presidential Disaster Declaration.
 - **Finding** – A request was sent to the DoD representative asking for a “list of available DoD resources.” DoD has numerous resources, and their use in any disaster would be determined by the emergency situation. DoD resources on the Federal level would be coordinated through a representative of Director of Military Support who would be located at the EST and who would have a list of available resources and procedures to acquire the resources.

It was noted that to ask for a list of “all available resources” with no specific qualifiers would cause extra, non-productive work.

- **Evaluation Element** – Validate individual State Initial Response Resources (IRR) requirements for hurricanes.
 - **Finding** – All States developed IRR lists, in coordination with ESFs 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 11 and the DoD. ESFs 1 and 7 provided the locations that IRR packages were to be deployed to as well as a point of contact upon arrival. IRR packages arrived at Westover, Massachusetts, on September 9 at 8:00 p.m., and on September 10 at 12:00 p.m.

ESF-1 provided transportation to the mobilization sites. Transportation was waiting for IRR materials as they arrived. Although Pease Air Force Base was designated as an arrival point for additional IRR materials, actual delivery had not been scheduled prior to the end of the exercise.



Figure 3-2. DoD Team at Region I ROC.

- **Evaluation Element** – Examine IRR Time-Phased Force Deployments List (TPFDL) concepts and procedures.
 - **Finding** – In Region II, IRR TPFDL coordination was initiated but not completed due to exercise termination.
- **Evaluation Element** – Assess activation, staging, and deployment of selected national response teams (e.g., Urban Search and Rescue Incident Support Teams, Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces, and Rapid Assessment Capability).
 - **Finding** – Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) and Incident Support Teams were activated and deployed. The process used to activate and deploy the teams was confusing because of the large number of requests and the lack of prioritization to areas most in need of US&R teams.
- **Evaluation Element** – Validate adequacy of the standardized cache of ERT-A equipment and ensure equipment is in place for deployment.
 - **Finding** – The ERT-A caches were identified, inspected, restocked, and validated on the first day of the exercise. The contents were compared to the immediate needs of the States with the intent to augment them with Federal resources already available in the affected areas.



Figure 3-3. *Urban Search and Rescue Team Gathering for Briefing.*

- **Evaluation Element** – Test timeliness of identifying and setting up mobilization centers.
 - **Finding** – Mobilization centers were identified, established, activated and ready to receive assets by day three of the exercise, when Hurricane Janet had passed through the northeast coast of the United States.
- **Evaluation Element** – Assess overall Federal responsiveness to the pre-staging of assets.
 - **Finding** – The overall Federal responsiveness to the pre-staging of assets was excellent. Packages were available and ready for deployment upon request. Procedures based on regional response plans were in place for delivery and control.
- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the EST Logistics Section’s ability to track and account for deployed commodities.
 - **Finding** – The EST relied on each Region to track and account for requested and deployed commodities.

In Region II, both action items and information messages were entered into the “action tracking system.” The actions that needed to be tracked to ensure that resources were properly deployed (or efforts were underway to obtain and deploy those assets) were included in the same message tracking system as the requirements that were not

considered critical to the affected areas. A separate tracking log would have reduced confusion.

Increased communication between the ERT-A elements deployed to the disaster area and their ROC counterparts prior to requesting specific resources is recommended. The EST believed that the damage estimates and projections might have been overstated and unrealistic and thus generated excessive requests for resources. For example, nine million homes were considered severely damaged or destroyed in one State, and there was a requirement for 775,000 cots in one State.

COORDINATION

Objective

Assess the coordination relationships and interoperability among all levels of government to conduct coordination when a catastrophic hurricane is predicted to make landfall

- **Finding** – Evaluation of this objective clearly indicates that the various FEMA response organizations including the EST and ROCs were able to coordinate the hurricane-related response activities with the various ESFs and the States. This coordination was accomplished via a variety of means, including the telephone, teleconferences, face-to-face meetings, briefings, fax machine, the action-tracking system, e-mail, and radio.
- **Evaluation Element** – Determine if State and local emergency plans have current, effective, and integrated Mutual Aid Agreements with neighboring States and Provinces of Canada where appropriate.
- **Finding** – Information provided by the Region II ROC Director indicated that neither New York nor New Jersey has any Mutual Aid Agreements in place. The exercise demonstrated the potential value of Emergency Management Assistance Compacts (EMACs). At present only 22 States have signed the Compacts. EMACs would be an effective means to develop Mutual Aid Agreements, and expansion of the arrangements to all States would enable sharing of large asset bases, like those in New York, with other States.
- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the ability to coordinate among ESFs and States.
- **Finding** – The Region II ROC should have procedures manuals and other resource materials accessible to all personnel. There did not appear to be any resource materials such as the *Federal Response Plan*, State plans and procedures, ROC standard operating procedures, ROC relocation plans, ESF plans or procedures, etc., available in the ROC for all personnel.

A number of maps of the Region and various storm-related maps and charts were posted on the wall of the ROC, but many of these maps and charts were generic in nature and depicted regional and political boundaries, predicted storm paths, etc. Participants commented that generic maps and charts should have been updated with specific information related to the storm's daily movement and location, location of key emergency response and recovery facilities, and geographic areas impacted by the storm. Having these basic planning resources available would be very helpful to the ROC and ESF personnel in planning, coordinating, and carrying out the basic emergency response and recovery activities in response to State needs.

During the daily weather advisories, the Hurricane Center Liaison used the HUREVAC (Hurricane Evacuation) model to respond to questions regarding anticipated storm surge levels, as well as the strength and extent of wind patterns inland. During one of the early weather advisories, the Hurricane Center Liaison noted that the HURREVAC Model is not Windows based. Thus, moving from one program to another is difficult, and responding to requests for information is inconvenient and cumbersome (less timely).

Pertinent information (e.g., daily action plans and priorities, weather and storm damage information, mass care needs, etc.) was provided to the ESFs and ROC personnel in briefings, videos, and computer slides. The information was rarely provided to the ESFs and ROC personnel in hard copy. It was recommended that the various types of information be provided in hard copy or on email to all key ROC personnel (ESFs and ROC section heads). The ESFs and ROC heads can distribute extra copies of the information materials so interested ROC and ESF support personnel and observers could have access. Having this information available in hard copy would facilitate ROC and ESF planning and coordination activities and also provide a "paper trail" documenting all aspects of the various emergency management entities' response and recovery efforts. This, in turn, would provide a more focused and timely response to State needs.

- **Evaluation Element** – Determine the need for ESF-1 liaisons to State EOCs.
- **Finding** – Region II deployed State liaisons on the first day of the exercise, and Region I deployed teams beginning on Day 2 of the exercise. Region II ESF-1 and Transportation did deploy a liaison to the New Jersey EOC on Day 2 of the exercise. The liaison was not deployed on Day 1 of the exercise because the State of New Jersey did not begin exercise play until Day 2. No liaison was deployed to the New York EOC. The Regions deployed ERT-A teams to the impacted areas.

The ERT-A teams consisted of representatives from the Regional ESFs, as specified by the *Federal Response Plan*. The purpose of the ERT-A teams was to assess the situation, collect damage information, and determine response requirements to assist the States. The ESFs took actions to determine the impact

of the storm and identified, mobilized, and deployed resources to support response activities in the affected States.



Figure 3-4. *Regional Operations Support Staff.*

- **Evaluation Element** – Exercise DoD's participation in the National Catastrophic Disaster Response Group (CDRG), EST, National Emergency Response Teams (ERT-N), ROCs, ERT-A, Disaster Field Offices, State Operations Centers, and Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) response coordinating bodies.
- **Finding** – Coordination with DoD indicated that DoD was a full participant in the simulated exercise response activities to the hurricane postulated in the scenario.
- **Evaluation Element** – Assess DoD's Command and Control disaster response system connectivity and procedures in providing support to a disaster that affects multiple Federal Regions.
- **Finding** – DoD participated in the CDRG and EST at the National level and the ROC and ERT-A at the Regional level. DoD does not participate in the State and local EOCs except for National Guard resources in a State role. During this exercise, DoD activated its normal disaster response system procedures.

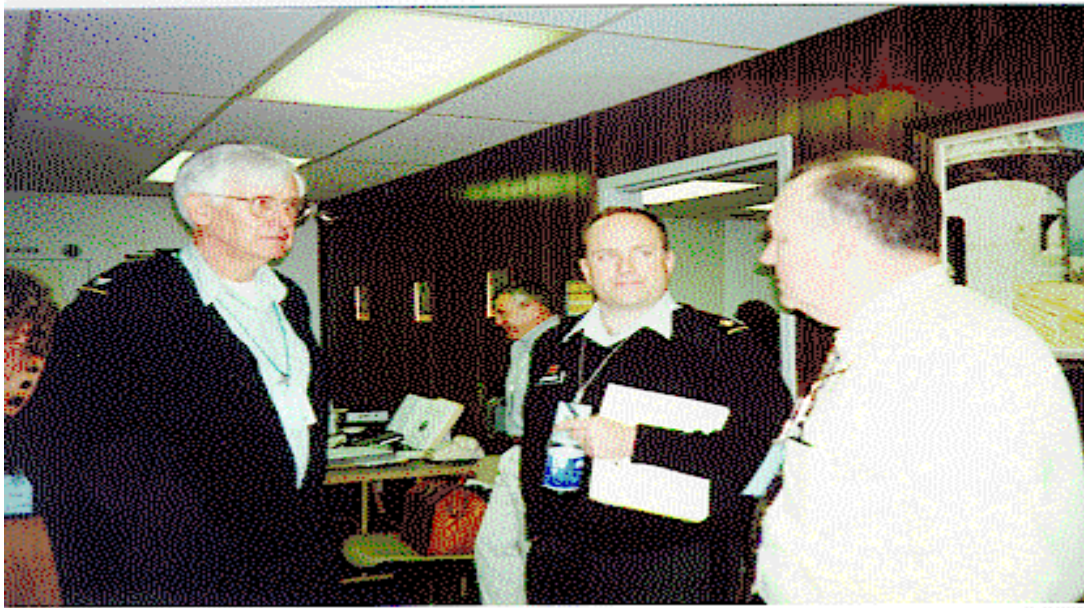


Figure 3-5. *Discussions Among Participants.*

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the ability of the DoD resource database to identify DoD assets available to support Military Support to Civilian Authorities operations within the disaster area.
 - **Finding** – DoD used its resource database to identify pertinent DoD assets for responding to an event of this nature. DoD assets are accessed through First Army and Forces Command Headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia. DoD support is provided under Title 10 the United States Code when the President has authorized the active military to respond to a natural disaster.
- **Evaluation Element** – Demonstrate the EST's ability to coordinate with and distribute information effectively to the CDRG, ESFs, and regions.
 - **Finding** – The EST was able to coordinate effectively and facilitate the distribution of pertinent information to the various entities involved in the response to the postulated hurricane. The initial decision to operate a limited cell in the EST resulted in insufficient capabilities and the need to fully staff the EST on Day 3 of the exercise. Once the EST was fully staffed, it was able to more effectively monitor the status of the exercise activities.
- **Evaluation Element** – Test regional ability to identify requirements and transmit those requirements to the EST.

- **Finding** – Throughout the exercise, the ROCs, with the assistance of the ERT-As, were able to identify the basic emergency response needs to meet the requirements of overwhelmed State and local governments. Basic documents used in carrying out the Region's emergency response activities included the following: *Federal Response Plan*; Regional response plans, standard operating procedures, and a host of other plans including ESF guidelines, standard operating procedures, and handbooks.

The Regions should consider the availability and viability of the action tracking system, if the ROC is relocated to an alternate location. If the system could not be utilized at the alternate ROC location, a standard operating procedure would be needed to clearly delineate how to continue action tracking. If such a standard operating procedure exists it should be made available and tested periodically.

The automated action tracking system should maintain a constant backup of data contained in the system to prevent the loss of critical data should the system crash during the response to a real-world event. In addition, the system should be refined so that ESFs could incorporate pertinent information regarding actions being taken on assigned action items and update or reflect the current status of particular action items without violating the integrity of the data contained in the system.



Figure 3-6. *Establishment of Mission Assignments at the ROC.*

- **Evaluation Element** – Assess EST ability to coordinate the allocation and prioritization of requested resources.
 - **Finding** – The mission system used in the ROCs is not priority based, and some of the information was viewed as invalid. The use of computer-based information systems slowed the overall response operation down. The system, as designed, does not allow ESFs to: (a) incorporate pertinent information into the system regarding action being taken on assigned action items; and (b) update or reflect the current status of particular action items. The system at Region I crashed during Day 1 of the exercise; however, the Region was able to reenter the last data into the system prior to the beginning of Day 2 exercise activities. This forced the EST to prioritize the allocation of resources without full benefit of ROC input.

It is recommended that the system be improved so that it can be priority based and will include information regarding action being taken on assigned actions items. Procedures should be developed to allow coordination between the ROC staff and the State.

- **Evaluation Element** – Examine procedures to coordinate sourcing, procurement, and receipt of critical commodities.
 - **Finding** – This was accomplished through the EST’s standard operating procedures in accordance with the *Federal Response Plan*.
- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate FEMA's Incident Reporting procedures (monitor flow from initial source, through the National Emergency Coordination Center, to other Federal agencies).
 - **Finding** – Based on review of the overall exercise proceedings, it is clear that FEMA effectively utilized the established incident reporting procedures. The key part of the incident reporting process was the Daily Situation Report. While the situation reports would normally be prepared twice a day during a real event, only one situation report was prepared each day during the exercise because the exercise play was limited to an 8-hour day.

Throughout the exercise, the ROC Director or other key ROC staff members (e.g., Deputy ROC Director, Operations Chief, etc.) conducted periodic briefings to inform the ESFs and ROC staff members of pertinent information relative to the response effort. All ROC ESFs and staff members were involved in decision making through the conduct of numerous conference calls and meetings.



Figure 3-7. *Providing Information to the Public via Situation Reports.*

PUBLIC INFORMATION, MEDIA RELATIONS, CONGRESSIONAL LIAISON, AND OTHER PUBLIC OUTREACH FUNCTIONS

Objective

Assess the coordination relationships and interoperability among all levels of government to conduct Public Information, Media Relations, Congressional Liaison and other Public Outreach Functions

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate whether State and local governments successfully and effectively distributed emergency information to the public.
- **Finding** – All participating State and local governments distributed emergency information to the public. A Public Information Officer and Congressional Liaison Officer were designated for the EST and each ROC. These individuals processed the release of information consistent with that being released by the States. Primary channels used were press releases, radio station calls, and posting of information on the Internet.

DONATIONS

Objective

Assess the coordination relationships and interoperability among all levels of government to conduct management of donated goods and services and maintain compatibility with the Federal Donations Policy

- **Evaluation Element** – Test interaction between Federal, State, and volunteer agencies' donations plans for ease of operability.
 - **Finding** – Volunteer agencies' donation plans were coordinated between Federal and State response organizations. Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Connecticut and Rhode Island have response plans in place. Massachusetts's plan is under development, and Connecticut's and Rhode Island's plans are under review and redevelopment.

The only request to FEMA for donations assistance came from New Jersey. Vermont and Massachusetts fully played donations management. These States have attended Donations training at the Emergency Management Institute (EMI). They activated their plans, identified donations coordinators, activated donations coordination teams, established donations coordination phone-banks, and established warehouses for donations resource staging areas. Connecticut had a State Emergency Management Agency official speak about how a donations management operation would work in Connecticut but did not simulate any donations play. New Hampshire, Maine, and Rhode Island all had virtually no donations management play in the exercise.

The Regions should have been discussing Federal assistance with donation management prior to landfall. The States that do not have completed donation plans need to continue development. States should participate in EMI State Donations Management classes if they have not already done so.

- **Evaluation Element** – Test the effectiveness of the donations information management system.
 - **Finding** – The NYSEMO and New Jersey Office of Emergency Management used the donations information management system. The response organizations were able to use the donations information management system without breakdowns or delays.
- **Evaluation Element** – Test Procedures for processing offers of international assistance.
 - **Finding** – Procedures for processing offers of international assistance were not very clear. The Region I ROC Director and his staff were actively involved acting as the initial contacts for donations. Specific international donation plans and procedures should be established.

MITIGATION

Objective

Assess the coordination relationships and interoperability among all levels of government to conduct mitigation in preparing for emergency response implementation prior to the landfall of a potentially catastrophic hurricane

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the ability and effectiveness of State and local emergency plans to "expedite" warnings, evacuations, and sheltering of at-risk populations for the purpose of saving lives and preserving health.
- **Finding** – The States and Regions made provisions to expedite warnings and evacuations and sheltering of at-risk populations. Evacuation messages should be pre-canned as much as possible and prepared in many different languages to communicate with the diverse population within these Regions.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE USING NEW PLANS AND PROCEDURES

Objective

Assess the coordination relationships and interoperability among all levels of government to conduct emergency response using new operational concepts and procedures, such as the National Emergency Response Team, and the Incident Support Team

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate Director Of Military Support Emergency Response Team (ERT-N) liaison officer support to an ERT-N deployment on the National Airborne Operations Center.
- **Finding** – Initial information provided by DoD's representative in the Region II ROC indicated that information available from 1st Army Headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia, indicated that an ERT-N had been deployed to Chicopee, Massachusetts, on the afternoon of Day 1 of the exercise. Current and complete procedures were available in both Regions I and II for the Emergency Response Teams.

The EST Director confirmed this simulated deployment on the morning of Day 2 of the exercise. However, on the morning of Day 3 of the exercise, DoD's representative in the ROC noted that the information regarding the simulated deployment of the ERT-N by 1st Army on Day 1 of the exercise was erroneous. Deployment of the ERT-N would not occur until after a Presidential declaration of a disaster under the Stafford Act. No further action was noted or observed on this matter following the Presidential declaration of a disaster for Hurricane Janet on Day 3 of the exercise.

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate procedural documentation for EST, ERT, ERT-A, (e.g., standard operating procedures, manuals, field guides).
- **Finding** – Current and complete procedures were available for all Region II ROC personnel. However, only some of the Region II ROC personnel had the ROC standard operating procedures and the Region II *Regional Response Plan* available on their desks.

The Region I ROC standard operating procedure (SOP) was not provided to the ESF representatives because the Region was in the process of developing it. As a result, some confusion was noted when reports were produced. A typical lack of procedural coordination was that after the senior staff met with the ROC director, information was not disseminated to the branch ESF representatives. The Operations Chief conducted meetings during the day that were not scheduled and without all ESF representatives or branch chiefs in attendance. When the ESF-12 representative arrived at the ROC, there was no briefing given on the current situation, ROC priorities, and ongoing actions.

Region I ROC should continue to work on SOPs and distribute them to all ESF members at the ROC. ESF representatives who arrive at various times during a disaster should be provided a short briefing on the current situation, ROC priorities, and other important information.

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the Territorial Concept.
 - **Finding** – Region II’s regional response organization employed the Territorial Concept in its response to the simulated disaster. This was accomplished in two ways. First, the EST simulated the use of the territorial Logistics Supply System in Georgia to meet needs in FEMA Regions I and II. Second, FEMA Regions I through IV simulated constant communication with one another and resource sharing as they would in a real-world event.
- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate effectiveness of Community Relations in effectively reaching the affected communities with appropriate information.
 - **Finding** – In Region II, the community relations teams were not deployed. However, the Deputy Director for the Region II ROC Operations Section noted that the Region II cadre manager for the community relations teams had pulled together a roster of available personnel to staff the teams had they been directed to deploy.

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Chapter 4

Evaluation from the Federal Perspective

Chapter 4 reviews the evaluation objectives planned for the twelve Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) as identified in the *Federal Response Plan* (FRP). Additional observations received from thirteen agencies concerning two other areas—National Weather Service and the Department of Energy—are included.

TRANSPORTATION (ESF-1)

Objective

Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the *Federal Response Plan* and its regional supplements to carry out transportation

- **Evaluation Element** – Establish an ESF support cell at an administrative location.
- **Finding** – The Department of Transportation is the lead agency for ESF-1. ESF-1 was able to establish support cells at the following locations: Movement Coordination Center, the Emergency Support Team (EST) and Regional Operating Centers (ROCs) in Regions I and II. The ESF-1 representatives at the EST and ROCs coordinated the transportation resources for multiple regions and States affected by Hurricane Janet. The ESF-1 representative in the Region II ROC was located away from the other ESF representatives, and it was recommended that this be changed to improve ease of coordination.

COMMUNICATIONS (ESF-2)

Objective

Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out communications

- **Evaluation Element** – Examine interagency coordination requirements between ESF-2 and other support functions.
- **Finding** – ESF-2 representatives coordinated effectively with other agencies. Adequate procedures are in place to coordinate emergency telecommunications requirements with other ESFs, and in particular, with ESF-2 support agencies. FEMA and ESF representation in the EST was limited. ESF interaction within the ROCs demonstrated effective coordination of requirements (see Figure 4-1). However, there was a lack of formal coordination meetings between the Operations Section and the ESFs (Region I ROC), and a lack of information flow to the ESFs (Region II ROC).



Figure 4-1. *Region I Staff Members Providing Coordination with States and the EST.*

It was recommended that an agency-wide commitment to an exercise of this magnitude be obtained early in the planning cycle and that those agencies that cannot participate be simulated. Tabletop exercises at the ROCs would enhance the internal coordination process and help provide specific guidance to section chiefs regarding their roles in supporting the mission of the ESFs.

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate government and industry coordination.
- **Finding** – The exercise demonstrated the effective coordination between ESF-2 and industry. The enthusiastic participation of industry representatives added realism to the exercise. Coordination with the telecommunications industry was adversely affected because ESF-2 was not included on all ERT-As. Information from Bell Atlantic and Southern New England Telephone flowed to the National Coordinating Center for Telecommunications (NCC) through the National Telecommunications Alliance, as well as directly to the regional ESF-2 representatives. It is important that an ESF-2 representative be included on the Emergency Response Team – Advance Element (ERT-A) because ESF-2 and NCC effectiveness relies upon bringing the telecommunications industry into the process early, particularly in the Disaster Field Office site selection process.

The National Communications System should encourage more industry representatives to participate in these exercises. Industry representatives to support other ESFs such as transportation and power should also be encouraged.

- **Evaluation Element** – Examine the ability to identify alternate forms of communications and coordinate pre-positioning of assets prior to landfall.
- **Finding** – Use of alternate forms of communication, specifically the Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS), Emergency Response Fly Away Kit (ERFAK), Shared Resources High Frequency Radio Program (SHARES), Emergency Response Link (ERLink) was observed during RESPONSE 98.

GETS cards were issued to Federal and State players, and GETS calls were placed from various exercise locations; however, the EST representative encountered difficulty placing calls from FEMA Headquarters. ERFAK was deployed to the Region I ROC and used for communications with the NCC. Ninety-nine SHARES stations representing fourteen Federal, State, and industry organizations participated in network operations and provided exercise message support. ERLink was utilized as an alternative means for dissemination of damage reports and access to the National Hurricane Center.

The exercise provided an excellent opportunity to test these alternative forms of communication operationally. Players benefited from the experience, but (simulated) communications outages at the State EOCs did not significantly impact ESF-2's use of alternate communications. Players using GETS cards from the FEMA EST determined that the 710 area code used by GETS was not accessible from that location.

Future functional and tabletop exercises should be conducted to address the issue of communications outages at the national and regional level. FEMA should take immediate action to program the Phone Branch Exchange serving the FEMA Headquarters facility to open the 710 area code so GETS calls can be placed.

Requests for assistance were sometimes received before a Mission Assignment Number had been authorized. ESF-2 personnel contacted industry, other government agencies, and the Communications Resources Information System in order to obtain necessary equipment and resources. The Mission Assignment process was not realistically exercised, which led to delays in the positioning of equipment.

Relationships between ESF-2 personnel and the government and industry contacts that they use to identify resources need to be strengthened. Also, ESF-2 needs to further investigate processes for completing preparatory activities without a Mission Assignment Number (and prior to Presidential Declaration).

- **Evaluation Element** – Identify the process for collecting damage data and disseminating information between Government and industry at the national, regional, and local levels.
- **Finding** – ESF-2 personnel collected telecommunications damage information from industry sources and disseminated reports via voice, e-mail, ERLink, and situation reports. ERLink proved to be an important means for sharing damage information, but it could not be fully utilized by all ESFs at the ROCs and at the EST. Regional ESF-2 representatives obtained telecommunications damage information from the NCC and from industry. Information was then shared with affected agencies. The NCC used ERLink, but the Internet browsers at the ROCs and at the EST did not enable users at those locations to load their reports.

Internet browsers should be upgraded at the FEMA ROCs and at the EST to either Microsoft Internet Explorer version 3.02 with file upload add-on for Windows 95 and NT (<http://www.microsoft.com/msdownload/ieplatform/iewin95/iewin95.htm>) or the latest version of Netscape Navigator.

- **Evaluation Element** – Examine the ability to prioritize telecommunications requests for limited resources.
- **Finding** – This objective was exercised primarily through Telecommunications Service Priority requests and inquiries. While resources did not become severely limited as part of exercise play, ESF-2 personnel in the regions were able to prioritize the allocation of resources for simulated limitations. In future exercises, ESF-2 should develop realistic implementers that will examine the ability to prioritize requests for limited resources.

PUBLIC WORKS AND ENGINEERING (ESF-3)

Objective

Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out public works and engineering

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate ESF-3 activation procedures.
- **Finding** – FEMA Headquarters, Regions I and II, and the States all had staffing procedures in place to meet the multiple requirements of the ROCs, ERT-As, Disaster Field Offices (DFOs), etc.
- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the ability to communicate with States and other

Federal agencies.

- **Finding** – FEMA HQs, Regions I and II, the States and the Canadian Atlantic Provinces planned communications outages during the exercise. Many effective means of communication were demonstrated throughout the exercise. The communications outages were easily overcome through backup systems. New Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Data Suites could be mapped into the communications and information-sharing plan.
- **Evaluation Element** – Procedures for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to support ESF-3 information requirements with Remote Sensing/GIS team concepts.
- **Finding** – GIS Data Suites and teams are a fairly new entity to the ROCs. Efforts should continue to build GIS capabilities. GIS information, practices, and techniques should be practiced and shared throughout the system.

FIRE FIGHTING (ESF-4)

Objective

Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out fire fighting

This was not a planned objective for this exercise.

INFORMATION AND PLANNING (ESF-5)

Objective

Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out information and planning

- **Evaluation Element** – Situation Reports (SITREPs), Incident Reports, Finance Reports, EST Action Plan, logs, briefings and tracking resources will be produced in a timely manner.
- **Finding** – Both FEMA Regions I & II did an outstanding job of clearly communicating timely SITREPs, Incident Reports, Finance Reports, logs, briefings, and tracking resources. These practices improved as the exercise progressed. This system should be exercised at least once a year.
- **Evaluation Element** – Ability to deploy two National Emergency Response Teams (ERT-Ns) to affected sites in a timely manner.
- **Finding** – The ERT-N was deployed to Region I at the request of the EST. The Region I Director was not advised or consulted as to that deployment. Procedures

require the Regional Director, the EST, and the FEMA Director to approve the ERT-N deployment. Controllers were not informed of a Master Scenario Events List inject which affected the scenario. Players at the EST did not follow standard operating procedures or exercise protocols.

MASS CARE (ESF-6)

Objective

Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out mass care

This was not a planned objective for the exercise.

RESOURCE SUPPORT (ESF-7)

Objective

Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out resource support

- **Evaluation Element** – Coordinate with local phone carriers for installation of phone lines to the DFO and FEMA disaster facilities.
- **Findings** – Procedures for phone carriers were excellent.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES (ESF-8)

Objective

Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out health and medical services

No observations were submitted under this ESF.

URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE (ESF-9)

Objective

Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out urban search and rescue

- **Evaluation Element** – Assess Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Incident Support Team alert and notification under pre-rostering concept.
- **Finding** – The US&R Task Force met all time deadlines that were planned early in the scenario, and communication with the Task Force was good. The exercise highlighted the overwhelming demand for US&R assets in a large-scale disaster. The exercise demonstrated that plans need to be developed for State Mutual Aid Agreements, and that procedures to utilize foreign US&R assets are necessary. US&R assets were requested by the State of New Hampshire for the collapsed building in Manchester and the State of New Jersey which was the hardest hit by

the hurricane. Transportation and rescue were well coordinated. There were ESF-9 liaisons in the ROCs who handled all information flow with the Task Forces.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS (ESF-10)

Objective

Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out hazardous materials management

This was not a planned objective for the exercise.

FOOD (ESF-11)

Objective

Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out food distribution

No observations were submitted under this ESF.

ENERGY (ESF-12)

Objective

Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out energy management

- **Evaluation Element** – (Headquarters) Conduct of activation, mobilization, and deployment of resources.



Figure 4-2. *ESF-12 at Work.*

- **Finding** – A primary objective for ESF-12 exercise participants was to validate internal ESF-12 ROC/DFO procedures. One element of these procedures is coordinating with the supporting and supported ESFs in the ROCs. At both of the Regions, procedures were either ad hoc or in the developmental stages, making coordination efforts tentative during the initial stages of the exercise. ESF-12 would be able to provide much better support to the ROC/DFO if a common set of procedures were available on which to base standard operating procedures. FEMA-sponsored training can provide guidance to the regions to help facilitate the development of procedures to improve coordination between ESF-12 and the Regions.
- **Evaluation Element** – (Field) ESF-12 Provisions for Resources and Support.
 - **Finding** – The ESF-12 representative on the Region I ERT-A team required Ground Fault Interrupter (GFI) devices but did not have the equipment. An alternate plan to get equipment to response teams that are deployed from the Regions, i.e., State Liaisons and representatives on ERT-A teams, is to include the equipment in the Initial Response Resource (IRR) packages. The technique was used during the floods in South Dakota where the ground fault interrupter devices were included in the IRR's. It was noted during the exercise that the IRR did not include GFI devices. The Department of Energy is willing to work with FEMA to examine this issue and again consider including GFI devices in the IRR.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

The following information was provided by the agency indicated and was not correlated to any specific Federal Perspective objective

- **National Weather Service** – The National Weather Service (NWS) provided weather support to local, State, and Federal agencies during Exercise RESPONSE 98. During the exercise, and prior to the start of the exercise, hurricane advisories were released every six hours to simulate as closely as possible a real-time hurricane scenario. The NWS, as part of exercise play, chose to simulate closure of the National Hurricane Center and initiate back-up procedures.
- **Department of Energy** – Many of the State and Federal control and evaluation staff were not familiar with exercise development. An exercise of this complexity requires an extraordinary coordination effort when developing the scenario, associated events, and implementing instructions. FEMA has an excellent exercise development training course, and providing this training to inexperienced Federal, State, and local planners at the beginning of the exercise development process would greatly facilitate the planning and conduct of the exercise.

Chapter 5

Participant Observations

During RESPONSE 98, the players commented on both the substance of the findings and on the exercise process. These observations were captured from a variety of questionnaires and comment forms both during the exercise and after the critique session held on the final day. This chapter summarizes the information supplied by participants from Regions I and II and from FEMA Headquarters.

REGION I:

- The majority of the RESPONSE 98 participants stated that the exercise contributed significantly to their emergency response preparedness. Players stressed that they gained an increased understanding of the entire response process by observing the other Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) staff at work in the Regional Operations Center (ROC). Participants noted that cross training would increase the Region's capabilities for disaster response in the future. Additional multi-level exercises were recommended to ensure that all staff could become familiar with response activities. State staffs were particularly pleased to have the opportunity to become more familiar with the operation of the ROC and the *Federal Response Plan*.

ROC Procedures

- An important exercise outcome was the improvement in ROC procedures, systems, and processes that resulted from preparations for play in the exercise. Participants wanted to use more problem-solving discussions during the exercise so that corrective actions could begin immediately. The exercise established a baseline for improvements that should be continued through additional tabletop exercises at Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) meetings, to work out details of standard operating procedures for the ROC.
- Additional computers, telephones, and administrative support would have improved the ROC operation. Participants agreed that the performance by both the Emergency Operations Center in the States and the ROC were effective. This was due primarily to the teamwork and excellent individual performance of participants. An observation was made that in a "real-world" emergency, much of the work done during this exercise at the ROC would have been transferred to the Disaster Field Office (DFO); therefore additional computers, telephones, and administrative support would not be required in the ROC. However, it is cost effective to train staff in the use of the equipment and ROC procedures and to ensure that all systems are working well until the DFO takes over.

- The alert system, responsible for notifying players, functioned well for most staff reporting to the ROC. Procedures for activation of the Civil Air Patrol were not followed as planned and should be reviewed.
- In the future, the Operations staff should brief the public information officer prior to mock press conferences so that all responses will be accurate. Resumption of situation reports would have helped ensure that participants were informed.
- The weather forecast procedures and capabilities need updating to ensure that the capability to receive reports from each office exists by way of a dedicated line. Additional information about the Geographical Information Systems (GIS) capabilities is needed at the ROC. The GIS is a valuable tool that, if used by the Regions and States, will increase response capabilities.

Team Work

- Teamwork and interactions, especially with ROC member counterparts in the States and at the national level, were listed as some of the most positive aspects of RESPONSE 98. Exercise artificialities delayed the flow of information to various participant levels. The State participants were unavailable to supply essential data in a timely manner, and this affected damage assessments that led to requests for Federal assistance.
- State participants felt that the key learning experience for them was a broader understanding of the level and type of detail required by Federal decision-makers in order to respond to States' needs. A suggestion was made to use Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) meetings to provide specific examples of the type of requests appropriate for the ESFs. These discussions would increase awareness at the State and local levels for the types of assistance States can expect from the Federal level, as well as the time it takes to receive such assistance. A specific example cited is the Initial Response Resource (IRR) Package that may be deployed in anticipation of a catastrophic disaster and pre-positioned at a Federal facility. States need to be aware that receipt of an IRR Package depends upon assessment of State resource capabilities and shortfalls. Therefore, the Regional Director and ROC Director need to make this assessment quickly so a request can be made early to deploy the IRR. This is the only way to ensure that States have the material immediately after the disaster occurs.

Exercise Process/Design

- The exercise orientation and start-up briefings provided excellent background information and set the stage so that the size and scope of the exercise was

well understood and the objectives and guidelines for play were clear. However, some participants felt too much time was spent on generalities and review of FEMA policies and procedures. These players wanted to know ROC and ESF team procedures and how to use telephones, e-mail, and facsimile. Much seemed to depend on the varying levels of previous training of each player.

- Participants wanted to see more use of videos in future exercises and wanted all the ESFs and the State and Federal levels working together to ensure that interactions can be tested. Brief update meetings throughout the day were viewed as an effective way to accomplish this goal.

REGION II

RESPONSE 98 contributed significantly to emergency response preparedness in Region II and was viewed by the key players as by far the most challenging exercise they had experienced. It was further indicated that the exercise exposed more strengths and weaknesses than had been found during actual disasters because the scenario was catastrophic. Most participants indicated that when shortfalls occurred, they were usually corrected. Participants stated that the inclusion of Canadian players increased the usefulness of the exercise and its realism.

Team Work

- Participants indicated RESPONSE 98 was a positive learning experience, and the exercise afforded them the opportunity to see the Federal and State levels of ESFs working together. Several regretted that more of their staff could not be participants as it was an excellent training vehicle. Especially helpful were the discussions about specific disaster procedures such as how to document requests for funds. Players came away with a greater understanding of the damage assessment process and of the level of specificity required in requests for assistance.

ROC Procedures

- Region II participants wanted more telephones and computers, meeting rooms, and daily updates in the ROC. Most agreed that an extensive orientation to the new Region II ROC before the exercise began would have been helpful. Although the ROC communications system worked well, it would have been beneficial to have action-tracking software to keep the latest status available. They graded the ability of the Region II ROC to meet deadlines as “effective” and said that the exercise provided insight into ROC operations and was a particularly effective way for non-FEMA responders to learn about FEMA procedures.

- A number of recommendations to improve the functioning of the ROC were made, ranging from posting information about meetings and heightened security arrangements to ongoing updates of vital disaster information displayed on the walls. The adequacy of the ROC as a facility was demonstrated during the exercise, although crowded conditions and noise were noted as needing attention. All players wanted to see the ROC tested again along with the relocation decision-making process.

Exercise Process/Design

- The orientation provided at the beginning of the exercise received high marks by the participants. Receipt of the player handbook prior to the exercise would have helped understanding of the objectives. The controllers and evaluators related well to the participants and did not interfere with exercise activities. More exercises that include all levels of response -- headquarters, emergency support teams, emergency support function agencies, regions, States and locals -- were recommended in the future.
- Several participants wanted to see more directed injects from State teams. This desire for more State play would lend greater realism to the exercise effort and provide more accurate information. Requests for more robust State play were echoed by numerous comments in a variety of ways. Future exercises should also include recovery as the primary scenario. It was also suggested that a daily critique be held so that corrective actions could be put into the next day's responses.

FEMA HEADQUARTERS

Most participants indicated that the coordination and consultation during the 18-month pre-exercise activity significantly improved the likelihood of an effective Federal response to a major disaster event threatening the U.S. Northeast coast and the Canadian Provinces. Relationships developed between the Canadian and U.S. participants at the State, Provincial, and local levels in preparation for RESPONSE 98 bore fruit during the winter ice-storms prior to the conduct of the exercise.

Follow-up Actions

- The recommendation to create a Housing Task Force as a way to adjudicate extraordinary housing requirements in a large disaster, especially across multiple regions and States, appears to merit further study.
- Mechanisms and procedures to use foreign Urban Search and Rescue assets need to be developed and promulgated so that smooth transfers can occur.

- When more than one State is impacted by a disaster, it may be useful to have a regional plan for resource allocations.
- RESPONSE 98 provided further evidence that the Emergency Management Assistance Compacts between States have great value and should be enhanced and expanded nationwide.
- Communications among the ESF, the ROCs, and the ERT-A are at best complex and can become confused. Additional training for the Headquarters and the regional staffs would smooth the process.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ARC	American Red Cross
CAP	Civil Air Patrol
CATS	Consequence Assessment Tool Sets
CDRG	Catastrophic Disaster Response Group
CT	Connecticut
DFO	Disaster Field Office
DMAT	Disaster Medical Assistance Team
DMORT	Disaster Mortuary Team
DOD	Department of Defense
DOT	Department of Transportation
E-mail	Electronic Mail
EER	Exercise Evaluation Report
EMA	Emergency Management Agency
EMAC	Emergency Management Assistance Compact
EMI	Emergency Management Institute
EMO	Emergency Management Office
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
ERLink	Emergency Response Link
ERT	Emergency Response Team
ERT-A	Advance Element of the Emergency Response Team
ERT-N	National Emergency Response Team
ESF	Emergency Support Function
EST	Emergency Support Team
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FNARS	FEMA National Radio System
FRP	<i>Federal Response Plan</i>
GETS	Government Emergency Telecommunications Service
GFI	Ground Fault Interrupter
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
HQ	Headquarters
HURREVAC	Hurricane Evacuation Software
IRR	Initial Response Resource
MA	Massachusetts
ME	Maine
MEMA	Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

MSEL	Master Scenario Events List
NCC	National Coordinating Center for Telecommunications
NH	New Hampshire
NJ	New Jersey
NWS	National Weather Service
NY	New York
NYSEMO	New York State Emergency Management Office
OEM	Office of Emergency Management
PIO	Public Information Officer
RAT	Rapid Assessment Team
RI	Rhode Island
RISC	Regional Interagency Steering Committee
ROC	Regional Operations Center
SHARES	Shared Resources High Frequency Radio Program
SITREP	Situation Report
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TECC	Trenton Emergency Control Center
TPFDL	Time Phased Force Deployment Lists
US&R	Urban Search and Rescue
VT	Vermont