FEMA Releases the 2017 Hurricane Season FEMA After-Action Report

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WASHINGTON – The Federal Emergency Management Agency released today the 2017 Hurricane Season FEMA After-Action Report. The report examines the agency's performance during the record breaking season. Last year, hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria devastated the nation at a time when FEMA was already supporting 692 federally declared disasters. During response to the three catastrophic hurricanes, FEMA also responded to the historic wildfires in California. The report captures transformative insights from a historic hurricane season that will help FEMA, the emergency management community, and the nation chart the path into the future. The report identified 18 key findings across five focus areas and offered targeted recommendations for FEMA improvements, as well as broader lessons for partners throughout the emergency management community.

"I'm extremely proud of how FEMA and the whole community performed under extraordinary circumstances," said FEMA Administrator Brock Long. "We are prepared for the 2018 hurricane season and have already applied lessons learned from last year to improve how we as an emergency management community do business. We are driven by continuous improvement and remain committed to helping people before, during, and after disasters."

As a cornerstone of the discipline, emergency managers use lessons learned in order to improve outcomes, minimize errors, and better serve survivors. The agency has already taken immediate actions based on the findings from the After-Action Report including updated hurricane plans, annexes, and procedures for states and territories; increased planning factors for the Caribbean and disaster supplies; and updated high priority national-level contracts, including the National Evacuation Contract, Caribbean Transportation Contract, and National Ambulance Contract. FEMA has also tested its response and initial recovery capabilities in the National Level Exercise (NLE) 2018, which occurred in May and focused on areas identified from real-world continuous improvement findings in this report.

Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria caused a combined $265 billion in damage and each ranked among the top five costliest hurricanes on record. As a result, FEMA coordinated large deployments of federal personnel, both before and after the storms' landfalls, to support response and initial recovery efforts across 270,000 square miles. FEMA facilitated logistics missions that involved more than $2 billion worth of commodities moving across several states and territories using multiple modes of transportation. FEMA Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces, composed of state and local emergency responders, saved or assisted nearly 9,500 people across the three hurricanes. In total, the hurricanes and wildfires affected more than 47 million people—almost 15 percent of the nation's population. FEMA registered nearly 4.8 million households for assistance.

FEMA has incorporated many of the findings from this report into its 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, which will guide implementation of long-term goals to build a more prepared and resilient nation. For a copy of the full After-Action Report, go to: https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/167249.

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