



**College of Medicine**

Department of Pathology, Immunology and Laboratory Medicine  
Florida Emergency Mortuary Operations Response System

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Friday, October 15, 2004

TO: Robert A. Smith, Ph.D.  
Director Emergency Operations  
Florida Department of Health

FROM: Larry R. Bedore  
FEMORS Commander

SUBJECT: After Action Report – Hurricane Ivan, September 7-22, 2004, Mission #978

**Executive Summary**

This was the second activation of FEMORS since its inception in June 2002. FEMORS was able to determine its response capability within a few hours, respond to the scene in a timely manner, assess the magnitude of the situation, satisfy the needs of the medical examiner, and demobilize operations appropriately as search and rescue teams ruled out rumors of massive fatalities.

- FEMORS kept its team members on stand-by following the end of Hurricane Frances' stand-down on Tuesday, September 7, 2004 and developed a Ready List of 101 team members who would be able to respond (assuming they were not impacted by Ivan's path).
- FEMORS provided pre-storm contact information to medical examiner districts in Ivan's path on Sunday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, suggesting pre-storm contact with the local EOC and methods to request assistance if the need arose.
- FEMORS was placed on official alert at 4:30 pm Wednesday, September 15<sup>th</sup>. Landfall occurred approximately 2:00 am Thursday, September 16<sup>th</sup>.
- FEMORS was activated to respond at 12:00 pm Thursday, September 16<sup>th</sup> based upon initial reports of 30+ fatalities seen floating in the bay.
- FEMORS activated a Go Team of 12 members and set staging for 5:00 am (CST) Friday, September 17<sup>th</sup> with an expected arrival time at Pensacola of 7:00 am.
- FEMORS' Go Team arrived at the District One Medical Examiner's Office at 7:10 am to meet with Dr. Minyard with another 7 team members scheduled to arrive later that day.
- Rumors persisted about 30+ fatalities spotted by a Sheriff's helicopter pilot as well as several other situations bringing the total estimate to 50-60 fatalities.
- FEMORS provided personnel assistance to the medical examiner for five days as rumors subsided and evaporated.
- FEMORS and DMORT jointly made appropriate plans to manage an anticipated large influx of families reporting missing persons by requesting activation of the DMORT Family Assistance Center team (a need which failed to materialize as rumors evaporated.)
- An estimated 1,400 labor hours were expended in this activation.

## Lessons Learned

- Notification of alert status for hurricanes from ESF8 (SEOC) to FEMORS should be made not less than 24 hours before anticipated landfall.
- Initial reports of massive deaths must be treated as valid until proven otherwise. However, initial response of FEMORS limited to the original Go Team concept where 10-12 early responders arrive to assess the situation, set up operational areas, and determine levels of additional resources to bring forward proved valuable in minimizing the number of personnel activated.
- Pre storm communications from FEMORS to the medical examiner provided guidance that resulted in a rapid response. Normally, it should be the medical examiner that initiates a request for mortuary assistance through the local EOC.
- Establishment of a medical examiner representative at the local EOC would have aided in managing rumor control. For offices with limited or compromised staff, a FEMORS member (with medical examiner operations experience) could fill that position.
- Communications links among medical examiner staff, EOC, and FEMORS remain essential, especially in storm situations where cell phone towers have been compromised. The equipment cache for FEMORS should contain a base station and eight radios for communications within a few mile radius of the base of operations.
- Activation of cellular phone Wireless Priority Service (WPS) for key command positions aided in maintaining better cell phone contact than at the previous activation, at least when Dr. Goldberger or Administrative Chief House initiated the calls. However, the process to activate the service needs to be simplified and done well in advance of any storm threat.
- Backup generator power for the medical examiner facility is essential both to maintain temperatures below 40 degrees Fahrenheit in the cooler section for remains preservation and to provide general office power necessary to process remains in a timely manner. Additionally, this may become the only operative location with cooler capacity to hold non storm-related remains for funeral homes without power. The use of refrigerated trucks to store and segregate remains (processed vs. non-processed vs. holds for funeral homes) proved to be essential as medical examiner office cooler space was limited and numerous funeral homes were without power.
- Because the medical examiner facility remained undamaged by the storm, and because the number of fatalities was not more than State resources could manage, no need arose to establish a separate temporary morgue for processing remains. However, if either situation had changed a portable morgue would have been required. At present, FEMORS does not possess equipment sufficient to set up such a morgue. Four options (all time consuming) to address the need for an immediate portable morgue operation exist:
  1. Request assistance of the Federal DMORT portable morgue team with an estimated activation interval of between 24-48 hours,
  2. Contract with the Kenyon International portable morgue team with an estimated activation interval of between 24-48 hours,
  3. Initiate field purchasing of hundreds of equipment items necessary to create a temporary morgue taxing ESF desks with rush order requirements and bringing into question the ability to affect deliveries in a timely manner, or
  4. Secure funding for the basic load equipment list during non-hurricane season months so that it would be ready for the ensuing season.
- Identifying insignia (temporary ID cards and lanyards) assisted members with access when curfews had been established and working hours extended beyond or before non-curfew times. Identifying vehicle insignia or window signs were also beneficial for negotiating traffic checkpoints.

## Event Time Line

### **September 7, 2004, Tuesday**

8:30 am Commander Bedore contacted ESF8 inquiring about FEMORS stand down for Hurricane Frances. Mike MacDonald advised that the Frances alert was over but Ivan was approaching so standby would continue. New mission number had not been assigned yet. RV and reefers would be kept on reserve in case they are needed for Ivan.

### **September 8, 2004, Wednesday**

5:00 am Advisory from NOAA. Ivan's path could lead up the west coast of Florida

9:25 am Commander Bedore contacted Mohammad Amirzabeh (850-591-1800) to check on status of three Blackberrys on Wireless Priority Service (WPS). He advised they were activated on Friday but would have a NexTel rep call back with details. Testing of WPS indicated service had not been activated.

### **September 9, 2004, Thursday**

9:50 am Monroe County, District 16 Medical Examiner Dr. Michael Hunter contacted Commander Bedore with questions about response in the event bridges would no longer be open. Asset request procedures through the EOC system were explained including air support options for helicopter transport of FEMORS personnel to the Keys and remains out to Dade or Collier County if needed. Discussion took place about requesting a refrigerated truck in advance, before the bridges became inoperative, to be placed at the office.

3:45 pm James Reese, Mortuary Officer contacted Commander Bedore to advise that he has initiated a survey of all independent funeral homes to assess storage capacity in case the need to share storage space arose.

### **September 10, 2004, Friday**

10:05 am Ron Berger (678-488-3022) of CDC contacted Commander Bedore with questions about exposed caskets. He overheard on a conference call about a situation in Columbia County and offered a contact number 850-528-4687 for Dir. Div. of Environmental Protection, Dr. Lisa Conti. Commander Bedore contacted Dr. Conti to explain FEMORS' role and options for disturbed cemeteries including re-identification in the event multiple graves were disturbed. She said there was only one so far and it was being managed by Wildlife officers for the time being.

2:40 pm Commander Bedore contacted Mohammad reference WPS (Wireless Priority Service) for key FEMORS positions. He referred to Bob Boggio (850-251-1846), the NexTel Gov't rep. Commander Bedore contacted Bob leaving a voice mail message.



- 3:00 pm Bob contacted Commander Bedore and offered the Public Safety Manager for NexTel, David Avila, 254-295-8758 who could verify whether or not the cell phones had been added to the list. Commander Bedore contacted David leaving a voice mail message.
- 3:25 pm David called back, took the information on phones, and would advise.
- 3:35 pm David advised none of the three were in the system. They must be entered at the web site [www.wps.ncs.gov](http://www.wps.ncs.gov) (the same web site Commander Bedore used to enter the data for Hurricane Frances).
- 3:40 pm Commander Bedore recontacted Mohammad who said Bob has responsibility for adding new numbers. Bob, in turn, accepted a fax'd (850-656-0341) copy of the three applications submitted on 9-2-04 for follow-up. He would provide e-mail confirmation once numbers have been activated.

### September 11, 2004, Saturday

- 11:50 am Barbara Gray, SEOC, ESF8, contacted Commander Bedore to do follow-up on an informational item related to Hurricane Frances. She wanted to know the resolution of the RV and two trailers ordered for Frances. She was advised that Mike MacDonald had transferred those assets to Hurricane Ivan as stand-by.

### September 12, 2004, Sunday

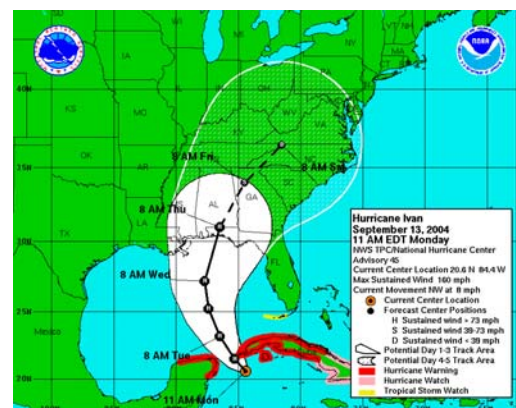
- 10:15 am Commander Bedore sent e-mail messages to targeted medical examiners districts:
- District 1 Dr. Andrea Minyard
  - District 14 Dr. Charles Siebert
  - District 2 Dr. David Stewart
  - District 4-3 Dr. Margarita Arruza
  - District 8 Dr. William Hamilton
  - District 5 Dr. Steven Cogswell
- 10:30 am Commander Bedore recontacted Bob Boggio regarding WPS service. He reviewed the applications and said all was in order. He forwarded them to DOH for approval.

### September 13, 2004, Monday

- 11:00 am Commander Bedore e-mailed Bob Boggio requesting follow-up contact phone number for WPS.
- 2:00 pm Commander Bedore received e-mail message from Jan Scheff, CMP Executive Director, Independent Funeral Directors of Florida, regarding a survey of cooler capacity they provided for reference.
- 9:00 pm FEMORS Ready list stood at 100.

### September 14, 2004, Tuesday

- 8:50 am Commander Bedore left a phone voice mail message for Bob Boggio requesting follow-up contact phone number for WPS.
- 2:00 pm Commander Bedore and Program Director Dr. Bruce Goldberger received a copy of an e-mail sent to medical examiners in Districts 1, 2, 4, and 8 by Gail Thomas-DeWitt regarding DMORT services.



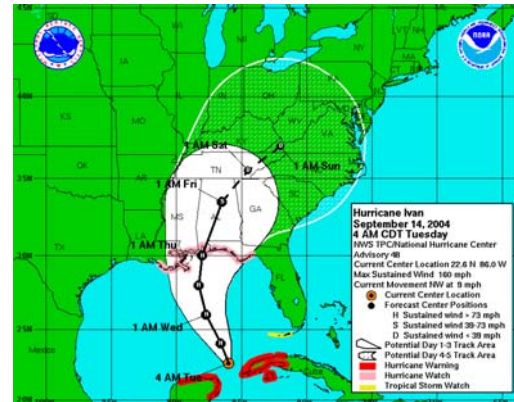
The last sentence was in error, to wit: "It is imperative that you realize FEMOR (sic) is a PRIVATE not State funded organization."

Both Commander Bedore and Program Director Dr. Bruce Goldberger attempted several times to reach Ms. Thomas-DeWitt by phone and e-mail to discuss an informational correction that was to be sent to the medical examiners affected by Ivan. No responses were received.

8:27 pm Commander Bedore issued a corrective e-mail to medical examiners.

8:33 pm Ms. Thomas-DeWitt returned Commander Bedore's calls and stated that she issued the message at the direction of a Mr. Young of FEMA, with the knowledge of DMORT Region IV Commander Cotton Howell.

Commander Bedore informed her of the federally funded, state administered status of FEMORS and that a correction was issued. Further, she indicated that medical examiners could request DMORT directly by calling NDMS. Commander Bedore explained the need for the EOC request routing system and the use of state assets prior to federal requests to ensure that services rendered would be reimbursable as opposed to a call made to NDMS outside of the EOC system.



### September 15, 2004, Wednesday

4:30 pm SEOC, ESF8 Mike MacDonald contacted Commander Bedore to officially place FEMORS on Ivan Alert. Mission #978. RV and trailers at SEOC would be ready to go.

### September 16, 2004, Thursday

2:00 am Ivan landfall near Mobile, AL.

10:20 to 10:50 am Commander Bedore made several calls regarding WPS glitches to Boggio, Reid, Amirzabeh, and Bret Hart, DOH communications

12:00 pm SEOC, ESF8 Mike MacDonald contacted Commander Bedore to officially place FEMORS on Ivan activation to Pensacola. Information received at SEOC from Sheriff's office deputy in helicopter indicated 30+ bodies seen floating in water. Mike advised one trailer was enroute to Bay County and one to Pensacola. Commander Bedore advised that the FEMORS team would pick up the RV at SEOC while enroute to Pensacola.

12:02 pm Bret Hart returned call to Commander Bedore. Original application forms were faxed to him to renew effort to activate WPS under DOH.

12:15 pm Dr. Goldberger contacted Commander Bedore to advise he was trying to make contact with Dr. Minyard. He would try to ascertain a staging area. Plans were made for Commander Bedore to stop in Gainesville to pick up Forensic Specialist Grosskopf enroute to SEOC for RV. Administrative Chief Kelly House would coordinate additional phone contacts for activation from Gainesville as Commander Bedore provided lists of positions to be filled.

12:20 pm Commander Bedore contacted Deputy Commander Paul Taylor to arrange a meeting time at SEOC for RV pickup.

12:40 pm Commander Bedore's attempts to reach Dr. Minyard remained unsuccessful.

12:45 – 1:30 pm Commander Bedore contacted numerous Go Team members about activation.



- 1:45 pm SEOC, ESF8 Mike MacDonald contacted Commander Bedore to advise that latest information was 35 bodies were floating. Information came from Deputy Steve Desposito with the Escambia County Sheriff's office. He also advised that DMORT had been activated.
- 2:00 – 3:00 pm Commander Bedore continued contacting Go Team members about activation.
- 3:10 pm Dr. Goldberger contacted Commander Bedore to advise he made contact with Dr. Minyard. Her morgue remained intact but without power except for limited generator service and was operable. She said she needed help. Her Ft. Walton satellite office was without power so all cases would be managed at the Pensacola office.
- 3:20 pm Commander Bedore departed for Gainesville and was contacted by Dr. Minyard who was advised of the plans under way. A time to meet on Friday morning was set for 7:00 am at the office at Sacred Heart Hospital. She advised she was not consulted about requesting DMORT and did not know who initiated the call.
- 3:40 pm SEOC, ESF8 Mike MacDonald contacted Commander Bedore to advise that staging for FEMORS responders was set up at the I-10 rest stop located at mile marker 61 near Crestview. Staging time would be 5:00 am for an escort to take the team into Pensacola because the main bridges were out. He also advised that 3 more reefers were enroute to Pensacola under mission #1484.
- 4:00 pm SEOC, ESF8 Bob Pearing contacted Commander Bedore to advise that alternative refrigeration units 40' long, not typical trucks, might be used.
- 4:30 pm Commander Bedore pulled into an I-75 rest area to finalize list of responders needed and prioritizing of back fill positions for later staging.
- 5:00 pm Commander Bedore advised Administrative Chief House of additional members to activate for Friday's first and second waves.
- 5:25 pm SEOC, ESF8 Mike MacDonald contacted Commander Bedore to ask about body bags FEMORS carries. He was advised FEMORS has no inventory. He would contact the sheriff to see what their stock holds. He would also pass on a FEMORS request to locate 20 rooms for lodging of team.
- 5:40 pm Commander Bedore resumed driving to Gainesville.
- 6:05 pm Mortuary Officer Greg Klimetz reported in. He survived the storm in his Gulf Breeze home and would meet with the team at Sacred Heart Hospital at 7:00 am.
- 7:15 pm Commander Bedore picked up Forensic Specialist Grosskopf in Gainesville.
- 7:20 pm Bret Hart, ESF2 advised that Daniel Parker with DOH approved FEMORS WPS applications. Process was continuing.
- 7:45 pm Commander Bedore contacted Director Smith to advise of plans. Current estimates now reach about 60 fatalities including a 12-story high-rise condo collapse and a building with 15 people having a hurricane party where the building had been destroyed. Patricia Kenyon would arrange accommodations.
- 9:20 pm E-mail message received from DMORT advising a team of 6 was enroute to Tallahassee to do an assessment of the situation.
- 10:30 pm RV (plate X13-JPJ) picked up at SEOC, equipment transferred from personal vehicles.
- 11:00 pm Team departed for staging area. Gusty winds still present along I-10.

### September 17, 2004, Friday

3:00 – 5:00 am Team assembled at staging area

Bedore, Larry	FCMD		
Alexander, Kenneth	MRTO	Hewlett, Melissa	FACS
Cohn, Kenneth	ODNF	Murray, Jennifer	FACS
Donnelly, William	PATF	Scott, Jonathan	RGTL
Grosskopf, Tammy	RGTL	Taylor, Paul	RGTL
Byrd, Jason	RGTL	Still Enroute	

Craig, Christine	FPTS	Still Enroute
Brewer, Pat	RGTL	Still Enroute

5:40 am Department of Transportation escorted team to Pensacola.

7:10 am First meeting with Dr. Minyard. Medical Examiner Investigator Karen Harvell had received a phone call from Gail Thomas-DeWitt who stated that once FEMORS spent its annual budget, the medical examiner would have to start paying for all services. That misstatement was exposed as such by Commander Bedore to Dr. Minyard who had dismissed it as untrue when first relayed.

FEMORS Command staff present consisted of:

- Commander Larry Bedore
- Operations Chief Paul Taylor
- Planning Chief Tammy Grosskopf
- Logistics Chief Jonathan Scott

Dr. Minyard and FEMORS ICS Command Staff discussed the situation and options and decided many issues:

- Daily operations would consist of morning and evening meetings, a single shift 7 am – 7 pm, and doing 6-10 autopsies per day focusing on identification needs.
- A caseload numbering system to segregate storm-related from non-storm-related cases was decided upon. Potentially 7 storm-related cases from Thursday were to be processed.
- Morgue operations and investigative staffing needs were identified to supplement Dr. Minyard's limited staff and space. Additional support positions would be brought in by FEMORS.
- Office staffing needs were identified, assuming the 60-victim scenario and the likelihood that it would produce at least 5 times that many family members who would seek information about missing loved ones.
- A Family Assistance Center (FAC) team was formed with Logistics Chief Jonathan Scott and Planning Chief Tammy Grosskopf to coordinate a location and staffing. Local hotels and motels were all damaged by the storm so off-site locations would be difficult.
- While FEMORS could initiate the FAC and begin the process to help families who call in or arrive, because of the lack of computer equipment, DMORT would be asked to provide its FAC team and equipment to manage a long-term FAC operation.
- Office and morgue facilities were intact but without air conditioning and only limited power by means of generator power of the hospital. Landline phone service was operational and FEMORS activated a portable generator (personally provided by a team member) to power up office copy and fax machines.
- Cooler capacity (powered) was 20 gurneys. Three reefers were parked adjacent to the office with a 4<sup>th</sup> parked nearby if needed. One would be designated to hold incoming remains, the second to hold processed remains, and the third for holding funeral home cases should the need arise.
- FEMORS' command post would be placed adjacent to the reefers.
- Forensic Odontologist Ken Cohn raised the issue of processing 60 fatalities for dental ID without power to control chemical temperatures in the film processors in the autopsy suite and a need for a DEXIS dental x-ray unit to manage the task (eliminating the need for chemicals and water). He would obtain equipment information for consideration.

9:00 am Brief team meeting was held for staff assignments.

<u>Member</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
Bedore, Larry	Command
Taylor, Paul	Operations Chief
Grosskopf, Tammy	Planning Chief & FAC
Scott, Jonathan	Logistics Chief & FAC

Scott, Jonathan	Logistics Chief & FAC
Donnelly, William	Pathology (thru Sunday)
Cohn, Kenneth	Odontology
Hewlett, Melissa	Autopsy Assistant & FAC
Craig, Christine	Autopsy Evidence & Photography
Byrd, Jason	Investigations & Identification
Murray, Jennifer	FAC & Autopsy Assistant
Brewer, Pat	Remains Storage (still enroute)
Alexander, Kenneth	Remains Storage
Klimetz, Gregory	Funeral Home Coordination

9:30 am Commander Bedore coordinated with Administrative Chief House on additional staff because of the anticipated number of fatalities. Those already enroute included:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Assignments</u>	<u>ETA</u>
Coffelt, Brandi	FAC Interview	12 Noon
Johnson, Luanne	FAC & Dental Assistant	12 Noon
Chaney, Erin	FAC & DNA	5:00 pm
Arlt, C. Renee	FAC & Autopsy Assistant	5:00 pm
Grice, Tracy	Autopsy Evidence & Photography	5:00 pm
Rogers, Koni	Investigations	5:00 pm
Moore, Kenneth	Investigations	5:00 pm

Additional staff to be activated for arrival at noon on Saturday included:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
Hobin, Frederick	Pathology
Almy, Maranda	Autopsy Assistant & FAC
Yates-Marshall, Judy	Odontology
Badger, Charles	FAC & DNA
Bellino, Vicki	FAC & DNA
Forrester, Ken	FAC & Remains Storage
Rhodes, Jay	FAC & Remains Storage
Gunter, Dean	FAC & Remains Storage
Way, Bart	FAC & Remains Storage

10:15 am Planning Chief Tammy Grosskopf prepared the Victim Identification Program interview forms and coordinated FAC staff to manage telephone and in-person interview processes.

10:30 am Dr. Cohn provided vendor contact information regarding DEXIS to Commander Bedore.

11:00 am Commander Bedore contacted SEOC ESF8 to request purchase of the DEXIS unit due to the anticipated workload.

11:45 am Logistics Officer Jonathan Scott advised that he had arranged with Sacred Heart administration to use the Heart Institute for staging the FAC. The Heart Institute would be out of service for a few days and was located at the main entrance to the hospital where families would likely arrive (thus relieving Sacred Heart of having to manage that aspect). This was far enough removed from the medical examiner offices in the basement to provide sufficient distance from morgue operations. Additionally, it provided secure meeting rooms and a chapel-like reception area for families waiting to be interviewed. Hospital staff would not have access during this time.



- 1:00 pm Commander Bedore contacted Patricia Kenyon regarding accommodations for that evening. She was working on finding rooms in Crestview and would advise when secured.
- 2:00 pm Meeting with Dr. Minyard, DMORT assessment team headed by Cotton Howell, Commander of Region IV, and FEMORS Command Staff. Dr. Minyard explained the situation so far that 9 autopsies were being completed and 6 cases were being transferred from the Ft. Walton satellite office (only some of which were storm-related), FEMORS was providing support personnel for all aspects of morgue operations, and had started the FAC. Explanation of the anticipated 60 fatalities was provided and the expected surge in family assistance needs. Mr. Howell stressed that DMORT was present only to offer assistance in support of the resources already deployed.
- Commander Bedore provided a status report on personnel activated, initial set up of the FAC, and lack of sufficient computer resources to manage large numbers of missing person reports. He requested that DMORT provide its FAC team and equipment to manage the long-term operation of the FAC. Mr. Howell agreed to initiate the request through the NDMS/FEMA system. Logistics Chief Scott provided a tour of the FAC set up for the DMORT team.
- 3:00 pm Dr. Minyard requested guidance on handling media inquiries. Commander Bedore advised her that channeling all media requests to the Information Officer of the local EOC was the appropriate method, especially during the initial phase of a disaster response. Further, the daily reports she provided to the Medical Examiners Commission (MEC) on confirmed storm-related fatalities were used as the basis for official notifications through ESF-16 (Law Enforcement-FDLE) to the Information Officer at the State EOC and, subsequently, back to the local EOC. Front office staff were advised to provide the contact information for the Information Officer of the local EOC to all inquiries from the media.
- 3:15 pm Planning Chief Tammy Grosskopf provided a special phone number for the Family Assistance Center to the Information Officer of the local EOC. In this way families who could not visit the FAC could report missing persons by phone.
- 3:30 pm Dr. Phil Levine, District 1 Chief Odontologist arrived at the medical examiner's office to coordinate dental ID needs with Dr. Cohn.
- 3:40 pm Patricia Kenyon e-mailed Commander Bedore with lodging information at the Days Inn in Crestview. Three of the reserved rooms were made available for the DMORT assessment team as no other lodgings could be secured.
- 4:00 pm Full power was restored to hospital and offices.
- 5:15 pm Commander Bedore e-mailed Administrative Chief House to advise that members Coffelt and Johnson, scheduled for noon arrivals had still not arrived due to clogged traffic. Follow-up phone contact requested that those scheduled for a 5:00 pm arrival should be contacted and diverted straight to the Day's Inn in Crestview.
- 6:00 pm Members Coffelt and Johnson arrived.
- 6:30 pm Dr. Minyard and Commander Bedore discussed the fact that the rumors of 60 fatalities did not appear to be holding true. Phone contacts with Sheriff Office personnel indicated that fatalities were not being found although search and rescue teams had not yet been able to reach all areas, especially along the beaches. Tentative decisions were reached that if significant numbers of remains were not apparent by Sunday morning, plans to ramp up additional resources and DMORT's FAC might be put on hold.
- 7:00 pm Operations ceased for the day and team departed to Crestview.
- 9:00 pm Arrival at Crestview caused concern as area curfew closed all gas stations from 7:00 pm to 6:00 am. Several vehicles were low on fuel so vehicle pooling would be needed the next day.

**Saturday, September 18, 2004**

- 5:00 am Team departed Days Inn to find a local gas station open next door. It ran out of gas before all vehicles could be refueled.

- 5:30 am Team departed Crestview for Pensacola
- 6:40 am Arrival of team at Medical Examiner's office. Pat Brewer arrived.
- 7:45 am Morning Briefing. No new cases overnight but the driver of the semi truck on the I-10 bridge would be coming in soon. Potentially 3 storm-related cases from Friday were to be processed. Routine cases would be also expected to resume. Dr. Karen Kelly of the satellite Ft. Walton office was present. Rumors have failed to materialize. Dr. Minyard provided aerial photo review of area damage. DMORT put a hold on plans to bring in the FAC team. DMORT assessment team would depart but remain in Crestview at the Days Inn for another day in case more fatalities were located.
- 8:30 am Commander Bedore contacted Administrative Chief House to have 7 of the 9 members due to arrive at noon recontacted to stand down and return home. Dr. Hobin (to replace Dr. Donnelly) and Dr. Yates-Marshall (assigned to deliver the DEXIS unit) would continue to respond.
- 9:00 am Commander Bedore contacted Jim Lutten, MEC, to provide an update of status.
- 9:30 am Logistics Chief Scott and Mortuary Officer Alexander coordinated with hospital maintenance crew to construct loading ramps for the reefers.
- 9:40 am Commander Bedore contacted the Escambia EOC to add clarification of the phone number for FAC. FAC had been receiving calls for all manner of assistance such as food, ice, and gas. Clarification of the name would be provided to media that the phone number was for Missing Persons Family Assistance Center.
- 9:45 am Mortuary Officer Klimetz began contacting all funeral homes in the 4 county area to assess storage needs and cooler capacity.
- 10:00 am Hospital cafeteria advised that it was low on food and would not be able to service FEMORS members, only hospital staff and families.
- 10:15 am Commander Bedore contacted Bob Pearing at SEOC, ESF8 to verify that funds may be spent to provide food for team. Logistics Chief Scott secured provisions at a local grocery for team lunch.
- 11:45 am Administrative Chief House confirmed that 7 responders had been reached and were returning home.
- 12:00 pm A new rumor surfaced that 12 fatalities were found in a collapsed condo.
- 1:00 pm Sheriff's office ID technician confirmed rumor was false. Someone had counted the 12 red Xs (code boxes) placed by search and rescue as if that was 12 fatalities. However, search and rescue still had not completed searches of all the beach areas yet.
- 2:00 pm Administrative Chief House advised Commander Bedore that Dr. Hobin was unable to get through the traffic and had returned home.
- 2:30 pm Logistics Chief Scott contacted Sheriff's office to coordinate missing person reports. Sheriff had 12, 3 of which might have been located. FAC had taken 25 reports. Sheriff staff would provide FAC phone number for further cases.
- 3:00 pm Members Grice and Arlt demobilized for return home.
- 4:00 pm Cotton Howell contacted Commander Bedore to check on the rumor of 12 new fatalities. Because it was not true and caseload was manageable, DMORT would pull out on Sunday morning.
- 5:00 pm Mortuary Officer Pat Brewer secured provisions at a local grocery for team breakfast on Sunday.
- 6:00 pm Evening meeting. Resume operations on Sunday with remaining team with more to be demobilized at the end of the day if situation remains stable.
- 6:30 pm Operations ceased for the day.
- 10:45 pm Commander Bedore e-mailed a status report to SEOC, ESF8.

### **Sunday, September 19, 2004**

- 6:00 am Team departed Days Inn.
- 8:00 am Morning meeting. So far 11 storm-related fatalities were processed, only 1 of which was unidentified. Investigative follow-up work continued on these and routine cases. All medical examiner

staff except Dr. Minyard were provided time off to assess damage at their own homes. FEMORS would continue to cover office, investigative, FAC, and autopsy functions for the day. Potentially 1 storm related fatality remained to be processed from Saturday.

10:00 am Medical Investigators Rogers and Moore went to Escambia EOC, at the request of Sheriff's office, to serve as liaisons for the medical examiner's office.

11:00 am Dr. Goldberger and Administrative Chief House arrived for a day visit.

1:45 pm Medical Investigators Rogers and Moore returned after finding that there was insufficient room after all options were explored. They did hear more rumors of certain areas with "bad smells" and "grids" being searched but were assured that they were false and the electrical grids were being searched for repair work.

3:00 pm Drs. Donnelly and Cohn demobilized to return home.

4:00 pm FAC operations at the Heart Institute were demobilized as call volume had diminished. Phone contact would continue in the medical examiner's offices.

6:00 pm Operations ceased for the day.

Members demobilized for return home on Monday included:

- Koni Rogers
- Kenneth Moore
- Melissa Hewlett
- Jennifer Murray
- Brandi Coffelt
- Erin Chaney

11:05 pm Commander Bedore e-mailed a status report to SEOC, ESF8.

### **Monday, September 20, 2004**

5:45 am Team departed Days Inn.

7:00 am Morning meeting. So far 12 storm-related fatalities were processed, all of which had been identified. One blunt trauma and two suicide gunshot wound cases remained for processing and identification. No new rumors. Finalizing of pending investigations were to be done. Funeral home remains storage issues and needs were to be clarified. Future staff needs might include 3-4 days of FAC and phone answering along with investigative follow-up.

9:20 am Escambia EOC Information Officer was advised that FAC phone number would now revert to normal medical examiner office number.

1:20 pm Commander Bedore contacted SEOC, ESF8 to have 2 of the reefers released (#4892 which was not used and #4897 which had held only one fatality.)

4:00 pm Investigative follow-up on all current cases was completed.

5:00 pm Operations ceased for the day.

Members demobilized for return home on Tuesday included:

- Dr. Jason Byrd
- Christine Craig
- Tammy Grosskopf
- Jonathan Scott
- Kenneth Alexander
- Luanne Johnson

10:10 pm Commander Bedore e-mailed a status report to SEOC, ESF8.

### **Tuesday, September 21, 2004**

5:30 am Team departed Days Inn.

- 7:00 am Morning meeting. So far, 13 storm-related fatalities were processed, all of which had been identified. Two carbon monoxide cases remained for processing and identification. No new rumors. Finalizing of new pending investigations was to be done. Funeral home remains storage issues seemed to be under control by the funeral homes. All remains in the trailers would be moved back into the medical examiner cooler and remaining 2 trailers cleaned and released.
- 9:30 am Transfer of remains from reefers and cleaning were completed.
- 9:55 am Commander Bedore contacted SEOC logistics to have the remaining 2 reefers released.
- 10:00 am Members Greg Klimetz, Paul Taylor, and Pat Brewer demobilized to return home.
- 10:30 am Commander Bedore received a voice mail message from Bret Hart that cell phone WPS was activated for Dr. Goldberger and Administrative Chief House but that Commander Bedore's phone could not be activated.
- 11:00 am Commander Bedore contacted Jim Lutten, MEC, to provide an update of status.
- 1:00 pm Commander Bedore secured the DEXIS unit for travel and provided Dr. Minyard with final reports including remains storage logs for the reefers, FAC contacts (7 personal interviews and 36 phone interviews), and responder lists. Final tally of storm-related fatalities was 15, all of which were identified.
- 1:15 pm Commander Bedore departed for Crestview with the RV command post.
- 3:30 pm Commander Bedore arrived at Days Inn.
- 6:00 – 10:00 pm Commander Bedore prepared reports and documentation.

### **Wednesday, September 22, 2004**

- 8:30 am Commander Bedore departed Days Inn for SEOC to return RV.
- 1:00 pm Arrived at SEOC, transferred equipment to personal vehicle, and returned keys to logistics.
- 1:30 pm Visit to main SEOC building to thank ESF8 personnel for the assistance.
- 1:40 pm Commander Bedore was contacted by Mortuary Officer Greg Klimetz with a request from Dr. Minyard to retain one reefer as funeral home needs resurfaced. The last trailer has been having problems staying powered on so two would be preferred with one as backup.
- 2:30 pm Commander Bedore contacted Greg Klimetz to confirm which trailers were still present and ensure that a request would be made for the additional time for 2 reefers.
- 2:50 pm Return visit to logistics to reactivate the last 2 reefers for at least one more week.
- 3:00 pm Visit with Director Smith to provide a report of activities.
- 4:10 pm Commander Bedore departed for home
- 10:15 pm Commander Bedore arrived home and deactivated.

### **Monday, October 11, 2004**

- 11:30 am Commander Bedore was contacted by Dave at SEOC regarding status of the remaining two refrigerated trailers.
- 1:45 pm Dr. Minyard returned Commander Bedore's call to advise that the trailers were being cleaned and would be ready for release.
- 1:50 pm Commander Bedore contacted Dave at SEOC to advise that trailers could be removed.