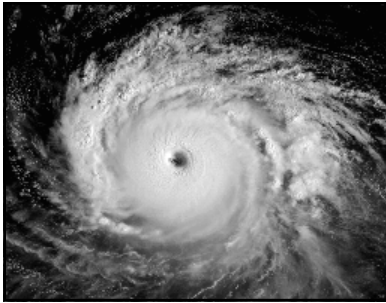


blueforce

QUALIFICATION

DISASTER COMMUNICATIONS

Hurricane Gustav, Jefferson Parish - Louisiana, September 2008



Overview

Hurricane Gustav was the second most destructive hurricane of the 2008 Atlantic hurricane season and triggered the largest evacuation in United States history. More than 3 million people fled the oncoming hurricane which caused nearly US\$6.6 billion in damages. The hurricane made landfall on the morning of September 1 at Grand Isle, Louisiana with wind speeds of 105 mph. The island's infrastructure was largely destroyed.

Blueforce principals were deployed to the island within hours of the storm passing and provided interoperable emergency communications that were used to assess and mount a rapid response. Local officials have estimated that the unprecedented access to communications so early in the response saved them months of recovery time.

Competencies

- Backpackable communications kits
- SUV communications platforms
- EOC/TOC "in the Field"
- Solar power generation and storage for 24x7 communications access
- 700/800, UHF, VHF Interoperability
- Designated Communications Officer
- Deployed operators & Mission Support

Qualification Details

- Rapidly/Hastily Formed Networks in Denied Areas: Blueforce principals deployed by Parish helicopter because roads and bridges were under water.
- Blueforce principals assigned and served as "Communications Officer" for the incident by Incident Commander
- Delivered, deployed, and operated two backpackable communications kits, one at City Hall, the other at the Fire Headquarters. These were used during the first 36 hours for rapid assessment, logistics, and initial response coordination.
- Once waters subsided, deployed and operated two SUV-based communications platforms for a six-day sustained EOC capability which was leveraged by nearly 400 responders from scores of agencies.
- Provided voice, video, and data where native infrastructure had been destroyed by the hurricane
- Inter-Agency Radio and Voice Interoperability: Enabled federal, state, local, and NGO radio communications when municipal 700/800 and trunking systems failed.
- Commendation: Team commendation given by Gustav Incident Commander, Town of Grand Isle, and Parish officials.

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