

# **CALIFORNIA TASK FORCE 3 URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE PROGRAM**



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## **Hurricane Irma Deployment After Action Report**

**September 7, 2017 – September 17, 2017**

**California Task Force 3 (CA-TF3)  
Urban Search & Rescue Program  
2017 Hurricane Irma Deployment**

**Task Force Administrative Information**

**Key Personnel in Task Force:**

Task Force Program Manager: Manny Navarro, Division Chief, MPFD

Task Force Leaders: Joe Crivello, Battalion Chief, SJS  
Ben Marra, Battalion Chief, MNL  
Jim Stevens, Battalion Chief,  
MNL Mike Shaffer, Battalion  
Chief, MNL Carl Kustin, Civilian  
Rex Ianson, Civilian

Task Force Logistics Manager: Tony Eggimann, Captain, MNL

Task Force Cache Manager: Ben Villao, CA-TF3

Task Force Grants Manager: Amy Kraska, CA-TF3

Task Force Records Specialist: Julie Quanz, CA-TF3

Task Force Medical Director: Dr. Dan Guenin

**Sponsoring Agency Name:** Menlo Park Fire Protection District

**Key Sponsoring Agency Personnel/TF Contacts:**

Manny Navarro, Division Chief [mnavarro@menlofire.org](mailto:mnavarro@menlofire.org)  
Amy Kraska, Grant Manager [amyk@menlofire.org](mailto:amyk@menlofire.org)  
Harold Schapelhouman, Fire Chief [harolds@menlofire.org](mailto:harolds@menlofire.org)

**Locations:**

Task Force **Mailing:** 1376 Willow Rd, Menlo Park, CA 94025  
**Physical:** Same

Warehouse Same

Sponsoring Agency 170 Middlefield Rd, Menlo Park, CA 94025

Training Site Bayfront Expressway, Menlo Park, CA 94025

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**Participating Agencies (names and locations):**

Aptos/La Selva Fire Protection District  
6934 Soquel Drive  
Aptos, CA. 95003

Central County Fire  
1399 Rollins Road  
Burlingame, CA. 94010

Monterey Fire  
610 Pacific Street  
Monterey, CA. 93940

Palo Alto Fire  
250 Hamilton Avenue  
Palo Alto, CA. 94301

Milpitas Fire  
777 S Main Street  
Milpitas, CA. 95035

Mountain View Fire  
1000 Villa Street  
Mountain View, CA. 94041-1295

Redwood City Fire  
755 Marshal Street  
Redwood City CA. 94063

San Francisco Fire  
698 Second Street  
San Francisco, CA. 94107

San Jose Fire  
1661 Senter Road  
San Jose, CA. 95112

San Mateo County Public Safety Communications  
400 County Center, Dept PSC100  
Redwood City, CA 94063

San Mateo Fire  
1900 O'Farrell Street #140  
San Mateo, CA. 94403

Santa Clara City Fire  
777 Benton Street  
Santa Clara, CA. 95050

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Santa Clara County Fire Protection District  
14700 Winchester Blvd  
Los Gatos, 95032-1818

South San Francisco Fire  
480 N. Canal Street  
South San Francisco, CA. 94080

Sunnyvale Public Safety  
700 All American Way  
Sunnyvale, CA 94086

Woodside Fire Protection District  
3111 Woodside Road  
Woodside, CA. 94062

**Corporations:**

Genentech  
1 DNA Way  
South San Francisco, CA. 94080

Stanford Research Institute  
333 Ravenswood Ave  
Menlo Park, CA. 94025

**Previous Deployments:**

Hurricane Harvey	2017	Federal	MRP
Hurricane Gustav	2008	Federal	III
Hurricane Ernesto	2006	Federal	III
Hurricane Katrina	2005	Federal	I
World Trade Center	2001	Federal	I
Oklahoma Bombing	1995	Federal	I
Hurricane Iniki	1992	Federal	I

**Internet Website:** <http://www.menlofire.org/> & <http://www.catf3.org/>



**California Task Force 3 (CA-TF3)  
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**General Info:**

California Task Force 3 (CA-TF3) is a multi-agency Task Force made up of 17 participating agencies and two corporations. Menlo Park Fire Protection District serves as the host agency, stores and maintains the Federal US&R cache. Task Force 3 is also one of the (8) Type 1 US&R Task Forces serving California. The agencies of this Task Force also staff (3) California Office of Emergency Services (Cal-OES) Type 1 Heavy Rescue Companies, which are used for local, immediate need technical rescue response.

Program Manager Office (650) 330-0150

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**Hurricane Irma Activation Information:**

California Task Force 3 (CA-TF3) was activated for deployment on September 7, 2017 at 1830 EDT hours for Hurricane Irma. Hurricane Irma was a threat to the United States, both CONUS and OCONUS. CA-TF3 was activated to support FEMA ESF #9 (search and rescue) activities.

Hurricane Irma was expected to bring life threatening wind and storm surge to the Florida Keys and southwestern Florida as an extremely dangerous major hurricane. Irma was expected to have life threatening wind impacts to much of Florida regardless of the exact storm track. Wind hazards were expected to spread northward through much of Georgia and portions of South Carolina and Alabama. Heavy rain and inland flooding was expected with total rain accumulations of 15 to 20 inches across Florida.

**Hurricane Irma Objectives:**

**OVERALL OBJECTIVES**

- Safely transport CA-TF3 cache and personnel by ground to Eglin Air Force Base in Florida for staging.
- Prepare for air or ground transport into theater after storm.
- Maintain a state of readiness while awaiting mission assignment.
- Provide for the safety and accountability of all CA-TF3 deployed members.
- Work within the US&R Code of Conduct at all times.

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## **SPECIFIC GOALS**

### ***Mobilization***

- Mobilize type 1 US&R personnel and cache to travel via ground transport to Eglin Air Force Base to stage for possible assignment for Hurricane Irma search and rescue operations.

### ***Command & Control***

- Develop and implement plan for initial and extended operations.
- Establish operational objectives using the planning cycle.
- Divide Task Force Leader roles and responsibilities between the two TFLs. TFL Crivello assigned to the cache and 30 personnel and TFL Shaffer assigned to travel with the remaining 51 personnel.
- Effectively communicate and coordinate with Plans on all aspects of the pre-deployment, deployment, and post deployment operations.
- Develop Demobilization plan including bus travel for personnel, transport of cache, and needed rehabilitation hours.

### ***Plans***

- Utilize the planning cycle.
- Create a Tactical Worksheet (TWS).
- Facilitate briefings.
- Work with all discipline Managers to document personnel accountability, 214's and 225's.
- Organize After Action feedback and documentation.

### ***Safety***

- Insure safety of personnel driving long distances and monitor activities on deployment to maintain safe working environment.
- Insure proper PPE is worn at all times relevant to the hazards of specific assignments.
- Insure that the activities/objectives are performed in a safe manner.

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***Logistics***

- Evaluate alternative equipment cache inventory for Logistics based on the capabilities of the transport (aircraft) limitations in Aircraft Response Module (ARM).
- Support multiple Task Force operations.
- Support logistical needs of Task Force members during travel and while at staging.

***Medical***

- Perform medical support throughout the deployment and monitor personnel during long travel days.
- Perform medical support for all Command and Support personnel.
- Develop a medical plan for Task Force operations.

***Communications***

- Establish communication capabilities to support the operational needs of the Task Force.
- Support the technical needs of the Command Staff (computer network, wireless printing, etc.).
- Evaluate alternative equipment cache inventory for Communications based on the capabilities of the transport (aircraft) limitations in the ARM.

***Haz Mat***

- Preplan potential hazardous conditions that are expected after the Hurricane passes through.
- Preplan for decontamination procedures as necessary during assignment.
- Evaluate alternative equipment cache inventory for Haz Mat based on the capabilities of the transport (aircraft) limitations in the ARM.

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***Search***

- Conduct a RECON of the identified impact area if assigned.
- Organize and conduct Search operations if assigned.
- Conduct search operations in conjunction with the local, state and federal agencies.
- Integrate GPS, mapping, listening, search cams, and canine into the search function
- Evaluate alternative equipment cache inventory for Search personnel based on the capabilities of the transport (aircraft) limitations and prepare for the ARM.

***Canine***

- Perform wide area search training operations, including the use of GPS if assigned.
- Evaluate alternative equipment cache inventory for Canine based on the capabilities of the transport (aircraft) limitations in the ARM.

***Rescue***

- Evaluate alternative equipment cache inventory for Rescue based on the capabilities of the transport (aircraft) limitations in the ARM.
- Prepare for potential Mission Ready Package (MRP) for water rescue to be deployed from the staging after the Hurricane passes through Florida.

***Transportation***

- Load the cache and transport to Eglin Air Force Base, Florida in timely manner.
- Manage the loading and unloading of cache.
- Manage the equipment unloading upon delivery back to Menlo Park, CA.

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**Evaluated Modules**

- Mobilization
- Transport of Personnel and Equipment Cache
- Establish Base of Operations
- On-site Operations
- Demobilization

**Mobilization:**

*What went well*

- The team was activated and kept an aggressive schedule to get the cache out the door and on the road by the time they set as their goal.
- The bus transport mobilization from the warehouse was very smooth and it worked very well to send the team separate from the cache and made the mobilization process less chaotic.

*Recommended areas for consideration*

- Not enough knowledgeable personnel in the mobilization line which caused confusion and delays.
- Need to ensure the Mob Manual is consistently updated and followed for all Stations, Discipline Checklists, Sponsoring Agency Support and CA-TF3 Admin Staff.
- Need to ensure that all appropriate CA-TF3 admin staff are receiving the activation orders.
- Need to have a backup POC and added to distribution lists (email and SMC). Need to ensure that POC's remain in the loop when team members are deleted and added to the roster
- Need to review tractor rental agreement. Needed to pick-up in Salinas and that created a delay in mobilization.
- Evaluate quantity of PPE provided to each member (BDU blouses, short sleeve shirts, grey color shirt).
- Need to assign someone that understands the process to handle all incoming calls from team members and POC's.
- Need to ensure that gear bags are 100% prior to time of deployment.
- Need to formalize a process for only task force members and support staff to be in the warehouse during mobilization
- Need to repair the communications (PA) for use in the warehouse
- Need to improve communications/consistency between the Sponsoring Agency Fire Chief and Task Force Admin staff
- Need to ensure that drivers are well rested prior to deployment.
- Need to ensure support and admin staff are properly identifiable (ex. vests, different colored shirts)
- Need to ensure that all credit cards are good to go and one credit card needs to be with each vehicle
- Need to ensure that team members receive notification from the task force administrative staff instead of through the media.

## **Transport of Personnel and Equipment Cache**

### *What went well*

- The equipment cache traveled out in front of the personnel buses and this was a good decision. The large trucks need to travel on different routes than the buses.
- All equipment and personnel were transported safely to and from Florida, over 5200 miles.
- Leap frogging of the big trucks and small vehicles was helpful and allowed the big trucks with larger fuel tanks to continue while smaller vehicles fueled.
- Calling ahead to bypass truck stops on the way to the incident was successful.

### *Recommended areas for consideration*

- Truck drivers should be more actively involved in the travel route planning.
- Set a plan for stops and stick to the plan. On the return trip, there was a change in destination for the hotel and this caused driver issues for the semi-trucks.
- Need a preplanned communication plan that has all cell phones and text groups should be established BEFORE leaving the warehouse to ensure all vehicles can effectively communicate.

## **Establish Base of Operations**

- CA-TF3 was never activated for assignment from Eglin Air Force Base Staging. However, the building that was assigned was adequate and worked well for the Taskforce. The disciplines worked together to establish work spaces for Plans, Communications and Logistics. Briefings were held in the large room that also functioned as the dormitory for sleeping. All accommodations were adequate and since it was a military facility the security of equipment was good.

## **On-site Operations**

- CA-TF3 did not actively engage in rescue efforts, but while staging at Eglin the team took every opportunity to prepare the cache for different readiness modules. Each discipline did cache rehab and performed training sessions. The Plans Team organized all planning meetings and briefings which were held each morning around 1000.
- Need to formalize a process for social media when keeping team members and significant others updated

## **Demobilization:**

- All apparatus should have multiple copies of ICS 212 Vehicle Inspection Forms and these forms should be completed by the mechanic assigned to the deployment as soon as it is known that the team is potentially getting demobilized.

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- All vehicle mechanical issues, routine maintenance (oil changes, fluids, tires, etc.) should be performed upon arrival to the destination to avoid delays in demobilization once orders are received.
- Need to ensure adequate, trained personnel on the demobilization line when returning to the warehouse.
- Need to improve communications between deployed members and staff setting up the demobilization line.
- Ensure tracking of high dollar items (example – monitor missing for a few days after deployment).
- Need to ensure there are enough personnel in the demobilization line that are fully educated in the overall process.
- Need to ensure that the team members follow the demobilization manual and each head station should refer to their checklist /binder
- Both the SA Fire Chief and the TF admin need to be on the same page when prioritizing
- Need to formalize a family member policy when team members arrive at warehouse
- Need to ensure that all documentation is completed for equipment damaged during deployment
- Need to review current demobilization fore efficiency; too much traffic in office hallway impacts the staff ability to complete work
- Need to create a policy to formalize who is responsible for collecting and maintaining incident documentation.

**Evaluated Sections:**

**The following positions/disciplines were evaluated during this exercise:**

- Task Force Leader
- Plans
- Search
- Rescue
- Medical
- Safety
- Haz Mat
- Logistics

**Task Force Leader**

***What went well***

- As our task force has not deployed in several years and many members are new to the task force or new to their positions, this deployment allowed for members to experience the different phases of a deployment, build relationships with personnel who they may have had limited exposure to, and to identify areas of individual and task force improvement.
- CA-TF3 has committed to enhancing our technology. During this deployment, several items purchased as part of this process were deployed and utilized by all disciplines, validating the need and identifying additional areas for improvement.
- As one Task Force Leader, this deployment allowed him to gain valuable experience specific to the roles and responsibilities required for the position. He was able to work effectively and collaborate

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with the other Task Force Leader, the task force discipline managers, task force deployed members, the IST Division Supervisor, Eglin Air Force Base staff, other task forces staged in the same location, and others as needed.

- During our time staged at Eglin Air Force Base, CA-TF3 task force members maintained a positive attitude and a willingness to do whatever needed to be done to prepare for deployment. This time was spent reviewing the ARM configurations with loadmasters from the base. In addition, disciplines effectively used this time to do cache maintenance/organization as well as discipline specific training.

### ***Recommended areas for consideration***

- During the travel to Florida, the cache and 30 members traveled non-stop (stopped for fuel and food only). Travel time to Florida was approximately 60 hours. The task force had planned to bed down on the last night prior to arriving in Florida. However, the task force was directed by the ESF 9 desk to continue travel as we were needed in Florida as soon as possible. The task force leader did share his concerns but should have pressed harder the need for rest for our drivers. The risk vs. reward for this situation did not warrant pushing through.
- Deficiencies were identified with the mobile radio equipment provided for the vehicles in the convoy. Some of the vehicles were provided “temporary” equipment at time of deployment and this equipment did not operate as effectively as needed during the transport across the country. In addition, more sophisticated equipment was provided in vehicles that did need this equipment.
- During the deployment, the chain of command for communications/requests within the task force was not followed. Requests were being made directly to specific individuals from the Sponsoring Agency that should have been submitted through the Task Force Leaders. This resulted at times in key personnel not being aware of requests as well as inaccurate information being provided.
- Numerous issues with credit cards. Discuss option for credit cards for each vehicle. This delayed the team
- Need to have “swag bag” to thank personnel who assist the task force during deployments (i.e. Challenge coins, TF Flag, t-shirts (non-uniform), etc.

## **Plans**

### ***What went well***

- Upon notification of activation on September 7, 2017, the Plans Team Managers (PTM) that were deploying responded to the CA-TF3 Warehouse and immediately began developing the Tactical Worksheet and Travel Plan. In addition, one PTM responded to help with the initial planning duties and managed all of the initial planning meetings. The support provided by the extra PTM that was not being deployed was critical to getting the team out the door and allowed the PTM and TIS time to prepare their gear for deployment.
- Planning meetings at the warehouse were effectively used to keep the team on task and helped to get the team out the door in a timely manner.

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- Technology (iPads) were utilized by discipline coordinators that made the submittal of 214's very efficient. The CA-TF3 Google Drive was a very effective way to manage all of the incoming 214's from all disciplines. 225's were also written on the iPads and submitted to the Google Drive.
- The hotspots worked very well for internet access while traveling with the cache to allow the TFL and PTM to produce necessary documents and to communicate information to the IST.
- 214's were maintained throughout the incident for the taskforce by one of the PTM's.

***Recommended areas for consideration***

- During mobilization have the PTM and TIS that are not deploying run all of the planning meetings and develop the TWS and Travel Plan. The travel plan does not need to have all stops identified. The plan should have final destination, travel route and first stop only. After that the PTM traveling with the cache or personnel bus can determine stops for food and fueling, in coordination with Logistics personnel.
- There needs to be more consistent use of T-Cards to provide for team member accountability. This area needs to be improved and a procedure should be developed to use T Cards for all individuals even when assigned to staging. This would have been useful at Eglin Staging.
- The PTM's need to make contact with the Structural Specialists early in the incident preferably at the warehouse prior to deployment and task them with assignments to support Plans until they are engaged in operations.
- The Apple laptops are superior to the Dell and should be used from the beginning. Taking the Dell on deployment in the "go bags" should stop and the Apple should
- replace the Dell in the bags. The Dell's can be kept in the cabinet to be used in mobilization but they do not need to be taken on deployment.
- Develop checklists / guidelines for how to utilize the iPads for documentation and how to submit them to the Google Drive. This would make it more efficient and not reliant on one or two technical experts to explain to each discipline coordinator.
- Plans needs to ensure that all discipline coordinators understand their responsibility to produce ICS 225 evaluations on all their assigned personnel. This should occur prior to demobilization with a deadline set for submission. There needs to be a folder created for submission of 225s that is not accessible by anyone other than Plans and TFL for confidentiality.
- One TIS needs to be assigned immediately to maintain the 214 for the Task Force as well as for the Plans Team.
- Plans personnel need to ensure accountability for the Structural Specialists assigned to them as well as communicating expectations to these personnel.

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- Consideration should be made to make a one-page team organizational chart that can be easily referenced, compared to the four-page roster.
- After Action Report (AAR) deadline for submission needs to be confirmed with the program

office to get an answer about whether it is 30 days after demobilization. The AAR process could be greatly improved if there was a one-page template form that followed the format of the AAR and each discipline coordinator filled out during demobilization (travel time). This would allow the AAR first draft to be easily completed in the 30-day timeline, including a meeting with the team to review prior to submission.

## **Search / Canine:**

### *What went well*

- The Canine Search Teams did an excellent job while traveling across country from Menlo Park, CA to Eglin Air Force Base in Florida and back.
- The Canine Search Teams conducted a challenging but excellent drill in a retired building on base.
- The Technical Search Specialist did great job setting up the battery charging stations and cycling the batteries through the chargers
- The Search Team's new technology - tablets and notebook - worked very well and look forward to their continued development.
- Overall the Search Team worked well together.

### *Recommended areas for consideration*

- There were a few instances where Search logistical procedural questions came up and the CA-TF3 Mobilization Manual was not referenced and deployed Search management was not asked before calls home were made.
- Plan for GPS and Iron Sights refresher training while in transit. The travel time to Florida was missed opportunity for the refresher.
- Ensure that the process of having vet checks on the canines both pre and post deployment happens regardless of whether or not canines were utilized for searches during deployment.

## **Rescue:**

### *What went well*

- Clear objectives were given and understood by Rescue Team members.

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- Communications between Rescue Specialists to Rescue Squad Officers to Rescue Team Managers was clear and concise; everyone knew their job even though no real assignments for deployment were necessary.
- Rescue Team Managers (RTM) attended operational and planning meetings which ensured they were an active part of the daily planning.
- Rescue Squad Officers did a good job supporting the needs of the Logistics Team around the living quarters to maintain a clean living environment.
- The cache work day at the hangar was a good refresher for the squads about the inventory of the Rescue Cages.
- There was value in the Rescue personnel working with the HERS cache for familiarity.

***Recommended areas for consideration***

- Travel was difficult on the Rescue Personnel. Had the team needed to go straight to work after traveling by bus or convoy across the country it would have been difficult to be productive when physically exhausted.
- Consider setting up our cache so that we could quickly access the tools and equipment. Doing so would make setting up a MRP Rescue component or configure an ARM much easier and make us more operationally ready to accept an assignment.
- Consider setting up a meeting with local Air Force Loadmasters to help us better understand how to set up our cache and boat trailers for air transport.

**Medical**

***What went well***

- The deployment allowed an opportunity for medical team personnel to evaluate medical equipment and gear configurations for use when deployed outside the BoO.
- We assigned one of the medical specialists, Katie Roberts, as medical unit leader to assist the MTM's for collecting intel and helping with flow of ICS.
- The Stanford pharmacy and staff at Mid- Peninsula Veterinary Hospital are terrific partners. Both groups were enthusiastic and efficient.
- A good deal of work occurred during the deployment to outfit our position bags and field care packs.

***Recommended areas for consideration***

- During the check-in process, the doctors were needed to assist the medical specialist with prepping the cache. In the future, we need more than 1 MTS to assist with mobilization of cache. Although we got it done, we needed more hands so that the doctors could be more involved

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with the medical check in process to assure we had essential medical/ patient information upon leaving warehouse. Need to make sure medical records are accessible to the MTM's and MTS's travelling with team members.

- Due to lack of help from other MTS's, several items were placed in cache by anyone willing to help and several essential items were difficult to locate when needed.
- Ensure that that a MTS is rostered that is capable of taking on the role of Medical Unit Leader. This MTS should have expanded knowledge in multiple disciplines as well as the entire US&R system in order to facilitate networking for intel as well as coordination with other disciplines. A medical specialist functioned in this capacity and was able to rapidly establish communications with MTS's from other task forces already working the event.
- Expired meds were discovered in the field packs in the cache. They were updated but need to make sure we are always in state of readiness. Medications needed to be borrowed from Menlo Fire Protection District. In the future, create a MOA with how our frontline field and position packs will be maintained.
- Determined a need to create an advance procedures pack for the MD's to have quick and easy access for amputations, crich's and other advanced procedures.
- Establish a mechanism for maintaining at least 2-3 field and position packs with current ALS medications, comfort meds and allow access to narcotics for team members.
- Budget for 2 pelican cases that would us to organize and store our pharmacy medications in a more efficient and rapid manner. The cases would be loaded, labeled and organized by Stanford. This would save the medical team several hours of work and would allow us to participate in other essential functions and "just in time" training for members who have not deployed.
- Finalize plan for ARM. A pod similar to hazmat or communication would be extremely beneficial and would allow us to function as a mobile clinic. This would also allow for easy access to all items that have expiration dates.
- Although we were able to update and re organize the field packs during deployment, had the need arose for an actual assignment, our cache was in less than perfect condition and would of required a significant amount of time to mobilize.

## **Safety**

### ***What went well***

- Safety interfaced with the TFL and Plans to support travel planning and driver rest periods. All personnel adapted and supported the travel pan with high levels of communication. Well supported communication between TFL/Plans, Safety, and the travel convoy.
- Fatigue issues were monitored by all managers. The command structure supported appropriate rest periods.
- The iPad / Google Drive interface ensured appropriate levels of documentation and enhanced shared information.

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- Facility planning at Eglin Air Force Base was well structured. Logistics was a key element in assisting in a safety plan for the BoO. Safety plan was completed with appropriate communication and documentation.
- Safety was proud to see the high level of support for team members when a significant event occurred at one agencies home unit. The ability to ensure team member support speaks volumes for a well-developed task force culture.

***Recommended areas for consideration***

- The iPad / Google Drive was an outstanding feature but electronic copies of ICS Safety Docs into google drive (215A and FEMA / OSHA forms would be a great addition. If possible, an apple laptop would be a great tool for both safety officers. This would enhance documentation.
- Travel safety was the highest concern for this deployment. Safety recommends roadway / highway travel safety equipment for all convoy vehicles outside of the basic DOT equipment carried on all vehicles. This could include safety vests, collapsible cones, and battery operated flashing road lights.
- Class “A” driver guidelines should be structured to ensure the efficient and safe rotations during deployment and demobilization. Clarity of communication for driver rotations will increase efficiency.
- The Communications Unit did a great job on this deployment. One piece that may be helpful in the mobilization phase would an electronic “WhatsApp” messaging list developed early in the deployment for enhanced communication.

**HazMat:**

***What went well***

- Briefings with our team and management went smoothly.
- Having experienced specialists to take care of our team.
- The interaction among other TF HazMat personnel was huge and very beneficial.
- IST interaction with Whats App prior to arrival was great.

***Recommended areas for consideration***

- Decon pod not restocked with quick turnover of Harvey.
- Sprint cell service was not available at Eglin AFB.

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- Can better prioritize opportunities with other disciplines for training (Search, K9 Decon)
- For both Harvey and Irma, a Menlo engine company began the check in process. A hazmat member was not present until later in mobilization process so RAD watches were issued late. Goal is to add a check-in sheet for medical to use with information on how to obtain and track RAD watches.

## **Logistics**

### *What went well*

- Sending both Logistics Managers out with the cache. This allowed us to focus on different tasks and projects in parallel.
- Utilizing available downtime in theater to provide disciplines access to their specific cache items for purposes of organization, familiarization and training.
- Reaching out to subject matter experts on Eglin AFB to improve our flight readiness and acting immediately on action items that grew out of the interaction.

### *Recommended areas for consideration*

- The mobilization of the team had some rough spots. The parking and key portion needs improvement.
- Fuel capacity on smaller trucks was sub-optimal. Ten-cylinder gas vehicles should be avoided. Maximizing fuel capacity on future vehicles is recommended.
- Rotation of drivers through the sleeper cabs should be more structured in order to ensure well-rested drivers.

## **Communications**

### *What went well*

- The addition of the new technology worked out well. From the use of the new laptops to the iPads.
- The ability to use the find my friends function of the apple products assisted in locating personnel in convoy transit from home to the work destination and back
- The addition of the NIB (Network In a Box) assisted in setting up connectivity for the command staff as the Mifi access became difficult. Also the conjunction of the NIB and the VSAT as congestion of the cellular towers soon became apparent with about 90% of the team was using Verizon as a service provider

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- Having many useful applications on the mobile devices made ICS forms, documentation, printing, mapping and research that much easier to do. The convoy was able to effectively use the mapping apps and internet to locate gas stops and other necessities. On the return trip, the Safety Officer even created the necessary documentation for rescue and evacuation from the hotel we were to stay at overnight. Logistics was able to locate food, water, gas and other necessities. The iPads made it that much easier than using a full size laptop while driving in a cramped vehicle.

### ***Recommended areas for consideration***

- With the additional technology, we found that more power outlets were needed not only to power communication equipment, but also to power and recharge the new technology.
- Need to hard wire FEMA communication equipment to the vehicles to minimize wires all over the vehicles. This is to include hard wiring mobile radios, MSAT systems, etc.
- Need to purchase more FEMA mobile radios and hard wire into FEMA owned vehicles, especially the big rigs.
- Need to setup a few flyaway communication kits in the event a rental vehicle is used. Kit should contain a hand held radio, battery eliminator, mag mount antenna or mirror mount antenna
- Need to purchase wireless access points to extend network connection beyond the limits of cable. This is when we are in a fixed building and the VSAT needs to be further away from the building for line of sight to the south purposes.
- Need better network cables the cheap ones failed
- Need to purchase some network equipment that we found would make the job function a lot easier. The lack of basic network switches made it difficult at times
- Need to develop a solid convoy plan so we can permanently assign communication equipment to every vehicle.
- Had a few handhelds that didn't function properly
- Need to create better kits when issuing communication gear. With the addition of the new tech, we need a better way to assign the equipment to the specific individual or discipline.
- Had a few MSATs that failed in the field. The failure requires contact with the vendor and possible RMA with the vendor

## **Conclusion**

On September 7-17, 2017, California Task Force 3 deployed to Eglin Air Force Base in Florida as part of the FEMA US&R Response to Hurricane Irma. This deployment provided an excellent opportunity for several team members to deploy for the very first time and for others to deploy in new positions based on promotions. This deployment identified several CA-TF3 strengths as well as areas for improvement moving forward. Members of CA-TF3 did a great job in developing a collaborative working relationship with military personnel at Eglin Air Force Base as well as the three other task forces that were staged in this location. Although CA-TF3 did not get

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assigned to Operations, the task force used this time to develop alternative cache configurations as well as completed multiple discipline level training to ensure operational readiness. Overall, CA-TF3 considered this deployment successful in preparing task force members for future deployments.