



National Association of State Foresters

FACT SHEET

2005 Hurricane Response – State’s Role

SUMMARY

The 2005 hurricane season was record-breaking in the United States, both in terms of the number of hurricane events and the destructive force they exhibited. It is widely understood that federal firefighting and emergency response teams participate in the recovery efforts following hurricanes and other natural disasters. It is less well known that state and local government personnel also contributed significantly to disaster recovery. In 2005, state wildland fire protection agencies provided the equivalent of 65,000 person days in response to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma at a cost of close to \$36 million. This equates to approximately 20 percent of the total response provided by wildland fire professionals during the 2005 season.

BACKGROUND

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina, a Category 4 event, made landfall on the Gulf Coast of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, bringing with it 140 mph winds. On September 24th, Category 3 Hurricane Rita made landfall on the Texas-Louisiana coast with 120 mph winds. Only one month later, Category 3 Hurricane Wilma, with sustained winds of 120 mph and a significant storm surge, cut across South Florida from west to east, impacting both coasts.

The 2005 hurricane season totaled more than 27 named storms, eclipsing the previous record set in 1933. Hurricane Katrina proved to be the most destructive hurricane in the United States in several decades. In response to such overwhelming devastation, local, state and federal wildland firefighters mobilized their resources to aid in the disaster recovery.

FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL INTERAGENCY RESPONSE

In total, the interagency wildland fire community provided 12,896 individual personnel for overhead or leadership assignments, 247 twenty-person work crews, 36 firefighting engines, and 129 Incident Management Teams (IMTs). This effort represents a commitment of over 23,000 people. With an average assignment of 14 days, this equates to more than 334,000 person days.

On a given day during the peak response period, as many as 5,500 wildland fire personnel, including 28 IMTs, were on hurricane assignments.

Examples of major interagency missions include:

- Managing twenty-one base camps and three evacuation centers that provided sleeping, food, shower, toilet, communication and transportation services to field going crews and supplied ice, water and meals to tens of thousands of displaced residents.
- Managing twelve receiving and distribution centers that inventoried, processed and shipped supplies to base camps and to the public, serving up to 50,000 people a day.

- Managing multiple staging centers for storage of equipment, vehicles and travel trailers until more permanent locations were identified.
- Staffing mobilization centers that managed both the arrival and departure of personnel and equipment.

STATE AGENCY PARTICIPATION

The National Response Plan (NRP) offers a mechanism for state and local wildland fire agencies to contribute personnel, via cooperative agreements with the USDA Forest Service, to federal response efforts. Using the NRP, states, along with their local partners, contributed significantly to the overall federal hurricane response, providing personnel to Area Command Teams, Incident Management Teams (IMTs), Logistics Management Teams (LMTs), Buying Teams and firefighting and work crews. In addition, state personnel were dispatched in support of initial and extended attack on wildfires that resulted from storm damage.

As an example of state contributions:

- States provided nearly 15 % (1,913 personnel) of the total interagency overhead response.
- States provided over 7 % (18 crews) of the total interagency hand crew response.
- States provided over 33% (12 engines) of the total interagency engine response.
- States provided over 32 % (42 IMTs) of the total interagency IMT response.

The overall response by state wildland fire protection agencies represents a commitment of approximately 65,000 person-days at a cost of close to \$36 million, not including the time and costs to train and equip the personnel who responded.

For more information:

Don Artley, NASF Fire Director / National Interagency Fire Center

Phone: 208-867-0908

Email: don_artley@blm.gov

www.stateforesters.org

STATE-BY-STATE BREAKDOWN

The following table shows a state-by-state breakdown of all resources supplied by state entities during the 2005 hurricane response.

Notes:

1. Data does not show state or local resources mobilized within the state.
2. With the exception of Incident Management Teams (IMTs), the data provided in this fact sheet only reflect state and local resources mobilized through the national fire mobilization system and tracked in the national Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS). Additional state and local resources mobilized through other means, including the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), are not included.
3. Incident Management Team information reflects the number of team assignments rather than the number of individual teams deployed. These numbers do include 22 State of Florida IMTs that were mobilized through the EMAC process.

| STATE | OVERHEAD | CREWS | ENGINES | IMTs |
|-------------|----------|-------|---------|------|
| Alaska | 89 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Alabama | 46 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Arkansas | 40 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Arizona | 20 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| California | 27 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Colorado | 49 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Connecticut | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Delaware | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Florida | 76 | 0 | 1 | 26 |
| Georgia | 183 | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| Idaho | 18 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Illinois | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Indiana | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Kentucky | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Louisiana | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Maryland | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| STATE | OVERHEAD | CREWS | ENGINES | IMTs |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------|-------------|
| Maine | 28 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Michigan | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Minnesota | 53 | 1 | 4 | 0 |
| Missouri | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mississippi | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Montana | 72 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| North Carolina | 375 | 3 | 0 | 7 |
| New Hampshire | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| New Jersey | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| New Mexico | 31 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Nevada | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Ohio | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Oklahoma | 12 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Oregon | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Pennsylvania | 21 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Rhode Island | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| South Carolina | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Tennessee | 64 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Texas | 413 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Utah | 6 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Virginia | 39 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Washington | 82 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Wisconsin | 35 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| West Virginia | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Wyoming | 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 1,913 | 18 | 12 | 42 |