

## Chapter 4

### Evaluation from the Federal Perspective

Chapter 4 reviews the evaluation objectives planned for the twelve Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) as identified in the *Federal Response Plan* (FRP). Additional observations received from thirteen agencies concerning two other areas—National Weather Service and the Department of Energy—are included.

#### TRANSPORTATION (ESF-1)

##### Objective

**Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the *Federal Response Plan* and its regional supplements to carry out transportation**

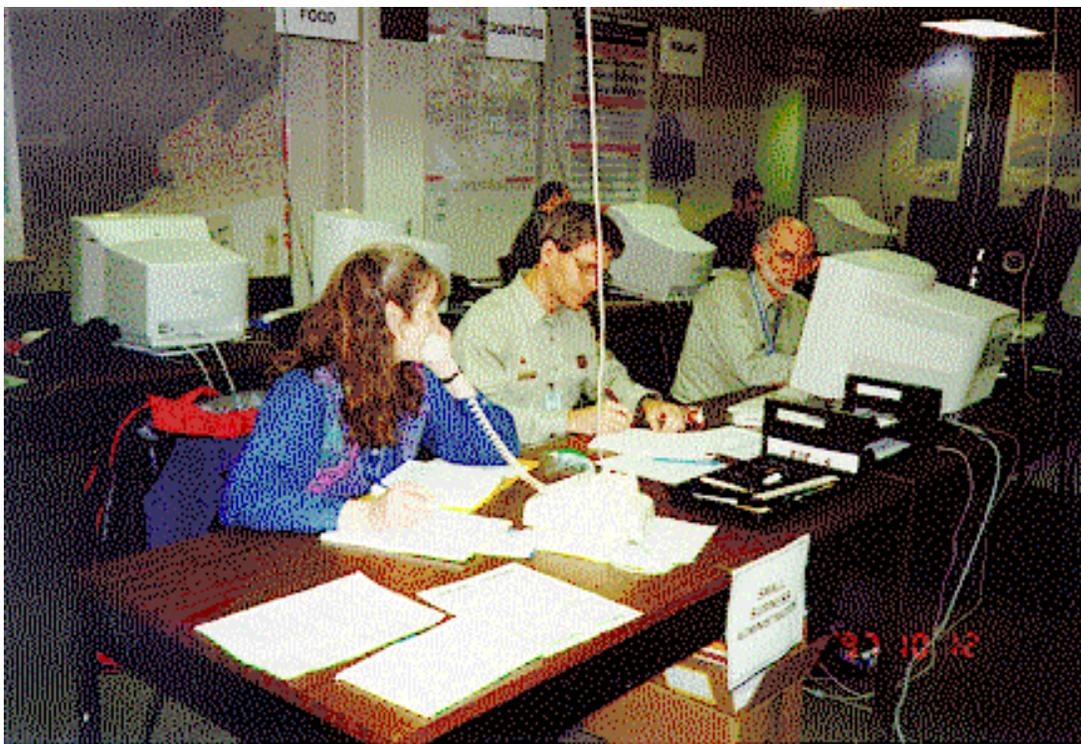
- **Evaluation Element** – Establish an ESF support cell at an administrative location.
- **Finding** – The Department of Transportation is the lead agency for ESF-1. ESF-1 was able to establish support cells at the following locations: Movement Coordination Center, the Emergency Support Team (EST) and Regional Operating Centers (ROCs) in Regions I and II. The ESF-1 representatives at the EST and ROCs coordinated the transportation resources for multiple regions and States affected by Hurricane Janet. The ESF-1 representative in the Region II ROC was located away from the other ESF representatives, and it was recommended that this be changed to improve ease of coordination.

#### COMMUNICATIONS (ESF-2)

##### Objective

**Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out communications**

- **Evaluation Element** – Examine interagency coordination requirements between ESF-2 and other support functions.
- **Finding** – ESF-2 representatives coordinated effectively with other agencies. Adequate procedures are in place to coordinate emergency telecommunications requirements with other ESFs, and in particular, with ESF-2 support agencies. FEMA and ESF representation in the EST was limited. ESF interaction within the ROCs demonstrated effective coordination of requirements (see Figure 4-1). However, there was a lack of formal coordination meetings between the Operations Section and the ESFs (Region I ROC), and a lack of information flow to the ESFs (Region II ROC).



**Figure 4-1.** *Region I Staff Members Providing Coordination with States and the EST.*

It was recommended that an agency-wide commitment to an exercise of this magnitude be obtained early in the planning cycle and that those agencies that cannot participate be simulated. Tabletop exercises at the ROCs would enhance the internal coordination process and help provide specific guidance to section chiefs regarding their roles in supporting the mission of the ESFs.

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate government and industry coordination.
- **Finding** – The exercise demonstrated the effective coordination between ESF-2 and industry. The enthusiastic participation of industry representatives added realism to the exercise. Coordination with the telecommunications industry was adversely affected because ESF-2 was not included on all ERT-As. Information from Bell Atlantic and Southern New England Telephone flowed to the National Coordinating Center for Telecommunications (NCC) through the National Telecommunications Alliance, as well as directly to the regional ESF-2 representatives. It is important that an ESF-2 representative be included on the Emergency Response Team – Advance Element (ERT-A) because ESF-2 and NCC effectiveness relies upon bringing the telecommunications industry into the process early, particularly in the Disaster Field Office site selection process.

The National Communications System should encourage more industry representatives to participate in these exercises. Industry representatives to support other ESFs such as transportation and power should also be encouraged.

- **Evaluation Element** – Examine the ability to identify alternate forms of communications and coordinate pre-positioning of assets prior to landfall.
- **Finding** – Use of alternate forms of communication, specifically the Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS), Emergency Response Fly Away Kit (ERFAK), Shared Resources High Frequency Radio Program (SHARES), Emergency Response Link (ERLink) was observed during RESPONSE 98.

GETS cards were issued to Federal and State players, and GETS calls were placed from various exercise locations; however, the EST representative encountered difficulty placing calls from FEMA Headquarters. ERFAK was deployed to the Region I ROC and used for communications with the NCC. Ninety-nine SHARES stations representing fourteen Federal, State, and industry organizations participated in network operations and provided exercise message support. ERLink was utilized as an alternative means for dissemination of damage reports and access to the National Hurricane Center.

The exercise provided an excellent opportunity to test these alternative forms of communication operationally. Players benefited from the experience, but (simulated) communications outages at the State EOCs did not significantly impact ESF-2's use of alternate communications. Players using GETS cards from the FEMA EST determined that the 710 area code used by GETS was not accessible from that location.

Future functional and tabletop exercises should be conducted to address the issue of communications outages at the national and regional level. FEMA should take immediate action to program the Phone Branch Exchange serving the FEMA Headquarters facility to open the 710 area code so GETS calls can be placed.

Requests for assistance were sometimes received before a Mission Assignment Number had been authorized. ESF-2 personnel contacted industry, other government agencies, and the Communications Resources Information System in order to obtain necessary equipment and resources. The Mission Assignment process was not realistically exercised, which led to delays in the positioning of equipment.

Relationships between ESF-2 personnel and the government and industry contacts that they use to identify resources need to be strengthened. Also, ESF-2 needs to further investigate processes for completing preparatory activities without a Mission Assignment Number (and prior to Presidential Declaration).

- **Evaluation Element** – Identify the process for collecting damage data and disseminating information between Government and industry at the national, regional, and local levels.
- **Finding** – ESF-2 personnel collected telecommunications damage information from industry sources and disseminated reports via voice, e-mail, ERLink, and situation reports. ERLink proved to be an important means for sharing damage information, but it could not be fully utilized by all ESFs at the ROCs and at the EST. Regional ESF-2 representatives obtained telecommunications damage information from the NCC and from industry. Information was then shared with affected agencies. The NCC used ERLink, but the Internet browsers at the ROCs and at the EST did not enable users at those locations to load their reports.

Internet browsers should be upgraded at the FEMA ROCs and at the EST to either Microsoft Internet Explorer version 3.02 with file upload add-on for Windows 95 and NT (<http://www.microsoft.com/msdownload/ieplatform/iewin95/iewin95.htm>) or the latest version of Netscape Navigator.

- **Evaluation Element** – Examine the ability to prioritize telecommunications requests for limited resources.
- **Finding** – This objective was exercised primarily through Telecommunications Service Priority requests and inquiries. While resources did not become severely limited as part of exercise play, ESF-2 personnel in the regions were able to prioritize the allocation of resources for simulated limitations. In future exercises, ESF-2 should develop realistic implementers that will examine the ability to prioritize requests for limited resources.

## **PUBLIC WORKS AND ENGINEERING (ESF-3)**

### **Objective**

**Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out public works and engineering**

- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate ESF-3 activation procedures.
- **Finding** – FEMA Headquarters, Regions I and II, and the States all had staffing procedures in place to meet the multiple requirements of the ROCs, ERT-As, Disaster Field Offices (DFOs), etc.
- **Evaluation Element** – Evaluate the ability to communicate with States and other

Federal agencies.

- **Finding** – FEMA HQs, Regions I and II, the States and the Canadian Atlantic Provinces planned communications outages during the exercise. Many effective means of communication were demonstrated throughout the exercise. The communications outages were easily overcome through backup systems. New Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Data Suites could be mapped into the communications and information-sharing plan.
- **Evaluation Element** – Procedures for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to support ESF-3 information requirements with Remote Sensing/GIS team concepts.
- **Finding** – GIS Data Suites and teams are a fairly new entity to the ROCs. Efforts should continue to build GIS capabilities. GIS information, practices, and techniques should be practiced and shared throughout the system.

## **FIRE FIGHTING (ESF-4)**

### **Objective**

**Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out fire fighting**

This was not a planned objective for this exercise.

## **INFORMATION AND PLANNING (ESF-5)**

### **Objective**

**Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out information and planning**

- **Evaluation Element** – Situation Reports (SITREPs), Incident Reports, Finance Reports, EST Action Plan, logs, briefings and tracking resources will be produced in a timely manner.
- **Finding** – Both FEMA Regions I & II did an outstanding job of clearly communicating timely SITREPs, Incident Reports, Finance Reports, logs, briefings, and tracking resources. These practices improved as the exercise progressed. This system should be exercised at least once a year.
- **Evaluation Element** – Ability to deploy two National Emergency Response Teams (ERT-Ns) to affected sites in a timely manner.
- **Finding** – The ERT-N was deployed to Region I at the request of the EST. The Region I Director was not advised or consulted as to that deployment. Procedures

require the Regional Director, the EST, and the FEMA Director to approve the ERT-N deployment. Controllers were not informed of a Master Scenario Events List inject which affected the scenario. Players at the EST did not follow standard operating procedures or exercise protocols.

## **MASS CARE (ESF-6)**

### **Objective**

**Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out mass care**

This was not a planned objective for the exercise.

## **RESOURCE SUPPORT (ESF-7)**

### **Objective**

**Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out resource support**

- **Evaluation Element** – Coordinate with local phone carriers for installation of phone lines to the DFO and FEMA disaster facilities.
- **Findings** – Procedures for phone carriers were excellent.

## **HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES (ESF-8)**

### **Objective**

**Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out health and medical services**

No observations were submitted under this ESF.

## **URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE (ESF-9)**

### **Objective**

**Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out urban search and rescue**

- **Evaluation Element** – Assess Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Incident Support Team alert and notification under pre-rostering concept.
- **Finding** – The US&R Task Force met all time deadlines that were planned early in the scenario, and communication with the Task Force was good. The exercise highlighted the overwhelming demand for US&R assets in a large-scale disaster. The exercise demonstrated that plans need to be developed for State Mutual Aid Agreements, and that procedures to utilize foreign US&R assets are necessary. US&R assets were requested by the State of New Hampshire for the collapsed building in Manchester and the State of New Jersey which was the hardest hit by

the hurricane. Transportation and rescue were well coordinated. There were ESF-9 liaisons in the ROCs who handled all information flow with the Task Forces.

## **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS (ESF-10)**

### **Objective**

**Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out hazardous materials management**

This was not a planned objective for the exercise.

## **FOOD (ESF-11)**

### **Objective**

**Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out food distribution**

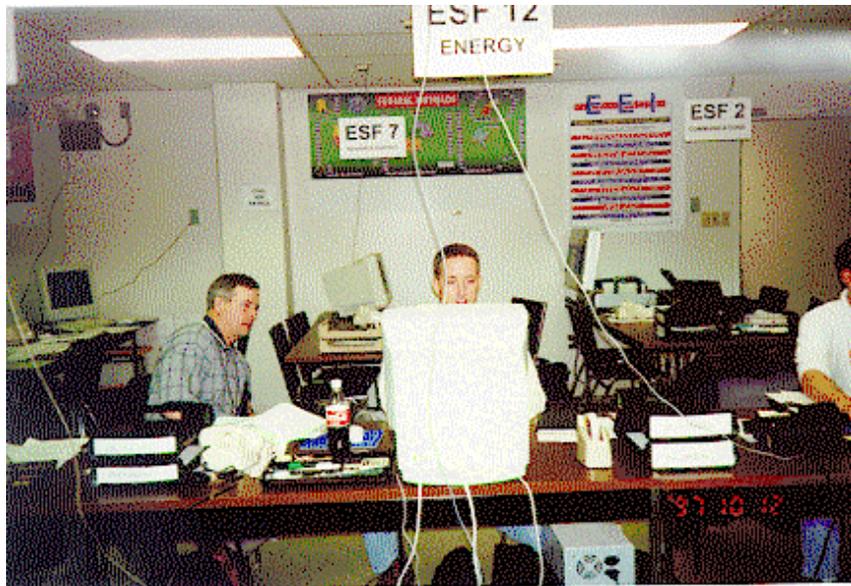
No observations were submitted under this ESF.

## **ENERGY (ESF-12)**

### **Objective**

**Assess the capability to provide Federal resources and support using the FRP and its regional supplements to carry out energy management**

- **Evaluation Element** – (Headquarters) Conduct of activation, mobilization, and deployment of resources.



**Figure 4-2.** *ESF-12 at Work.*

- **Finding** – A primary objective for ESF-12 exercise participants was to validate internal ESF-12 ROC/DFO procedures. One element of these procedures is coordinating with the supporting and supported ESFs in the ROCs. At both of the Regions, procedures were either ad hoc or in the developmental stages, making coordination efforts tentative during the initial stages of the exercise. ESF-12 would be able to provide much better support to the ROC/DFO if a common set of procedures were available on which to base standard operating procedures. FEMA-sponsored training can provide guidance to the regions to help facilitate the development of procedures to improve coordination between ESF-12 and the Regions.
- **Evaluation Element** – (Field) ESF-12 Provisions for Resources and Support.
  - **Finding** – The ESF-12 representative on the Region I ERT-A team required Ground Fault Interrupter (GFI) devices but did not have the equipment. An alternate plan to get equipment to response teams that are deployed from the Regions, i.e., State Liaisons and representatives on ERT-A teams, is to include the equipment in the Initial Response Resource (IRR) packages. The technique was used during the floods in South Dakota where the ground fault interrupter devices were included in the IRR's. It was noted during the exercise that the IRR did not include GFI devices. The Department of Energy is willing to work with FEMA to examine this issue and again consider including GFI devices in the IRR.

## **ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS**

**The following information was provided by the agency indicated and was not correlated to any specific Federal Perspective objective.**

- **National Weather Service** – The National Weather Service (NWS) provided weather support to local, State, and Federal agencies during Exercise RESPONSE 98. During the exercise, and prior to the start of the exercise, hurricane advisories were released every six hours to simulate as closely as possible a real-time hurricane scenario. The NWS, as part of exercise play, chose to simulate closure of the National Hurricane Center and initiate back-up procedures.
- **Department of Energy** – Many of the State and Federal control and evaluation staff were not familiar with exercise development. An exercise of this complexity requires an extraordinary coordination effort when developing the scenario, associated events, and implementing instructions. FEMA has an excellent exercise development training course, and providing this training to inexperienced Federal, State, and local planners at the beginning of the exercise development process would greatly facilitate the planning and conduct of the exercise.