

# Hurricane Milton

10/09/2024

Communications Operations

After Action Report/Improvement Plan

## Overview

**Incident:** Hurricane Milton made landfall on the Southwestern coast of Florida as a category 3 hurricane on Wednesday October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024. While Collier County did not receive a direct hit, we did receive tropical storm force winds and five feet of storm surge which caused substantial flooding in coastal areas.

**Communications Synopsis:** On Wednesday October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, The Collier County Sheriff's Office Communications Center activated Code Red and went to Alpha/Bravo shifts, beginning at 1400hrs.

During the activation period, the Communications center had a minimal uptick in calls related to the storm. Many calls were able to be transferred to the 311 phone bank which was incredibly helpful.

Communications members spent their standby time at \_\_\_\_\_ in space set aside specifically for Communications.

Due to the diminished impact of the storm, Communications administration made the decision to demobilize B (night) shift at 0600 on Thursday October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and A (day) shift on Thursday October 10<sup>th</sup> at 1600.

## After Action Report

**Observation 1:** Sleeping space was limited inside the male's sleeping quarters at .

**Recommendation:** If we use as sleeping quarters again, it is our recommendation that we obtain two more to be able to adequately fit members, and to account for any extra bodies, such as those sent by other departments. We have reached out to in an attempt to obtain additional sleeping quarters.

**Observation 2:** The Communications Center provided transportation from to the ESC throughout the duration of the activation. There is the possibility that weather could deteriorate passed the point of being able to shuttle members back and forth.

**Recommendation:** It is our recommendation that we work with EMS to find space for Communications members to sleep during times of activation.

**Observation 3:** Out-of-department members were sent to the ESC to assist with the Welfare Taskforce that was run by the Communications Technical Division. Each of these members came into the Communication center advising they were confused and had no direction. They did not know where to report to, where they were sleeping, or what they should be doing. Two separate members were told to call the ROC for information, and they were redirected back to the Communications Technical Division and told they were to receive direction from them. Members of Communication were unable to assist as they had no information from the Welfare Taskforce.

**Recommendation:** In the future, it would be prudent to send any out-of-department members that are to be involved with the Welfare Taskforce an email ahead of their arrival that details pertinent information such as who they report to, where they are sleeping, and exactly what their duties and working hours are. This email should also be sent to Communications Operations so they can assist these members if the need arises.

**Observation 4:** Communications members were unaware of how the Welfare Taskforce worked, and when it was operational and when it was demobilized.

**Recommendation:** Going forward, Communications Supervisors should be given clear direction from the Welfare Taskforce so that information can be passed to the floor members.

**Observation 5:** For an activation of this magnitude, the refrigerator space in Communications was very limited due to the number of people we had to feed.

**Recommendation:** After previous activations, we purchased a deep freezer that proved to be very useful. Going forward, Communications would like to request the purchase of an additional refrigerator dedicated specifically to activation purposes. Communications operates out of the ESC and is on generators, therefore the loss of power will not be an issue.

**Observation:** During an activation, the A/B shifts provide us with ample staffing. This allows us to separate all radio channels (to include districts 3 and five, and 2 and 4) to mitigate the added radio traffic that comes with an emergency activation.

**Recommendation:** In the future, we will make sure road patrol is aware of this so that it can be accounted for and added into the IAP if they feel it is needed.

**Observation:** Some members requested the use of cots. We had cots provided to us from the EOC, but it took six hours to receive them. We are also aware that we cannot depend on the EOC for cots as they will not always have them available.

**Recommendation:** We will look into purchasing 15 cots for Communications use during activations.

#### **Additional Resources Requested for Future Activations**

- 1 Refrigerator
- 15 cots