



E Team empowers Charlotte UASI Region partners to coordinate efforts and share vital information throughout the UASI Region and across state borders.

## E Team: Emergency Management without Borders

Considering the potential for local disturbances and medical emergencies during large-scale events, the Charlotte region has established a proactive emergency planning program. For example, this area of North Carolina hosts several large events during the Memorial Day weekend, transforming itself into a downtown festival and playing host to a major motorsport event, drawing tourists from around the nation. This creates a local challenge for emergency responders.

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In 2003, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) identified the Charlotte-Mecklenburg region as a potential location for a terrorist attack. As a result, eight North Carolina counties and two South Carolina counties collaborated to organize the Charlotte Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI). The Charlotte UASI focuses on the prevention of, preparedness for, response to, and recovery from, terrorist incidents.

## Charlotte UASI

### Challenge:

To provide an incident management system that can be used as a common platform for gathering and sharing information across independent municipalities.

### Solution:

Implement NC4’s E Team incident management system that allows jurisdictions to share complex data streams from multiple sources in a single, easy-to-use solution that delivers collaboration, real-time mapping, and fast access to information.

### Benefits:

- Inter-agency collaboration and communication between cities, counties and numerous local and non-governmental organizations
- Establishes complete interoperability between region’s emergency responders
- Ability for all jurisdictions to share critical information while managing high volumes of data
- Fosters the strengthening and development of new interagency partnerships in preparedness, response and recovery

## Locally, Charlotte-Mecklenburg puts E Team to the test

Understanding the need for a local emergency response solution, yet also aware that emergency managers are not always technologically confident, Charlotte-Mecklenburg searched for a user-friendly, easy-to-deploy product that could be up and running quickly after implementation. After reviewing five solutions, the county chose NC4's E Team technology.

"E Team was the one solution that offered everything each partner at the local Charlotte-Mecklenburg level wanted," said Garry McCormick, Battalion Chief, Charlotte Fire Department. "The police force especially liked the law enforcement functions and the all-encompassing platform. Combined with the fact that we could program region-specific data and begin using it right away, E Team was the logical choice."

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In 2005, a month after Charlotte-Mecklenburg purchased E Team, Hurricane Katrina hit the Louisiana coastline, displacing thousands of families and causing widespread devastation and chaos. Shortly after the storm passed, the county began receiving hurricane evacuees. As the evacuees arrived by air and automobile, Charlotte-Mecklenburg found itself setting up shelters in its coliseum and trying to track approximately 2,200 people who had lost everything, including their personal identification.

Although Charlotte-Mecklenburg's E Team implementation was still in its early stages and many key workers still required training, the county was able to utilize E Team to help manage the sheltering mission. E Team's Case Management reporting feature allowed first responders in the county to begin tracking people the moment they arrived for assistance. Charlotte-Mecklenburg used this data to register people in one main database, as well as share information with support agencies such as the Red Cross and Salvation Army. The common goal was to provide those devastated by the natural disaster with the basic necessities to survive and recover from their ordeal.

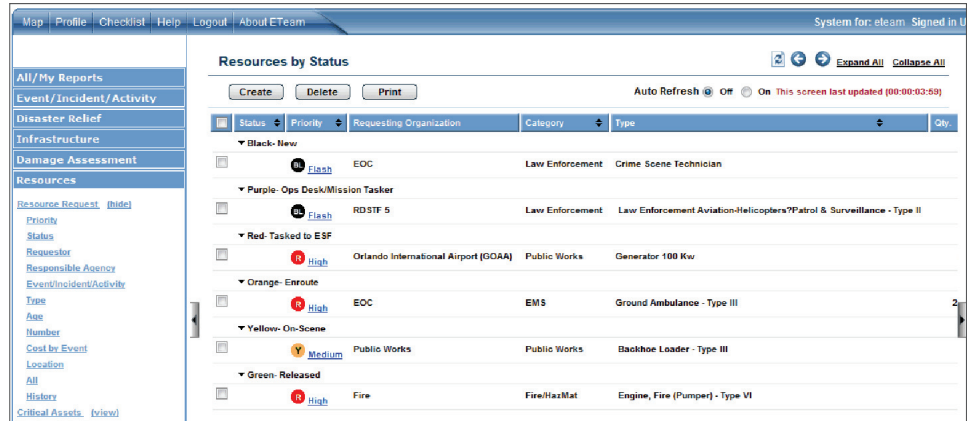
"Throughout the entire event, NC4 and its E Team technology were truly pillars of support," McCormick said. "NC4 was on the ground with us the entire time, offering support and helping us implement the necessary technology to track, house, and provide necessities for the many people who had lost everything."

## Charlotte-Mecklenburg Emergency Management Challenges

Located in an area of the southeast where hurricanes, tropical storms, and flash flooding can severely impact first responder activities, emergency management offices in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg region have long focused on emergency response preparedness with a common goal of protecting the area's more than two million citizens. Historically, emergency response and coordination was managed by each individual county utilizing the tools they had available to them, from handwritten notes to spreadsheets and the legacy state system for tracking and reporting. However, emergency response agencies found these methods to be time consuming and inefficient, as they required multiple phone calls to different agencies to find correct contacts and gather necessary information.

To accomplish the common goal of protecting citizens more efficiently, the UASI needed a more reliable system that would enable real-time data sharing and eliminate miscommunication.

“Originally, when emergency personnel responded to an incident, we all used our own dispatch systems to communicate with our jurisdictions, and then used the telephone or fax machine to notify neighboring jurisdictions of potential emergency situations and request specific resources,” said Stacie Neal, program manager, Charlotte Fire Department. “This process was time consuming and ineffective – often the information we received was inconsistent, incomplete, or out-of-date, leading to additional phone calls and even more time allocated to simply sharing information. We recognized the critical need to share information in real time in order to increase the effectiveness of our emergency operations.”



“When looking at solutions, we wanted a program that would enable instant communication for resource and asset sharing,” McCormick said. E Team’s real-time, collaborative features enable multiple counties to share vital information including resource requests.

## From Charlotte-Mecklenburg to the Charlotte UASI Region

As a diverse, widespread area spanning both county and state lines, the Charlotte UASI Region needed a regional solution that would allow all counties in the area to communicate during an emergency, as well as document information for Federal reimbursement. To consolidate and manage resources effectively, the UASI also wanted a system that would enhance mutual aid – allowing partner counties to call on shared major emergency response groups to avoid the potential for duplicate operations.

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Following the success Charlotte-Mecklenburg experienced using E Team to assist with its effort to shelter Katrina victims, the Charlotte UASI Region decided to implement E Team throughout the region. Funded via a DHS grant, the Charlotte UASI Region developed standalone E Team systems for five North Carolina counties, one South Carolina county, and two North Carolina cities, enhancing emergency preparedness and allowing each city and county to communicate with the surrounding jurisdictions. These systems provide a common framework for information sharing that includes standardized reports, requests, notifications, and maps, as well as a complete set of Web-based incident management tools to sort and prioritize data. The Charlotte UASI Region completed its E Team implementation in six months and NC4 provided separate training for each county in order to tailor the E Team application to meet specific county and city needs.



E Team allows Charlotte UASI partners to quickly and easily share vital information and access reports during events.

## Implementation benefits

With the days of phone calls and paper shuffling behind, emergency managers in the Charlotte UASI Region have improved efficiency by cutting their administrative work load. Agencies typically spent the weeks following an incident calculating costs, entering data, and submitting reports necessary to properly document response and recovery efforts. E Team has greatly improved after-incident reporting tasks by allowing staff to record events as they happen on a daily basis as well as during disasters.

“E Team empowers users with the ability to share information and access reports quickly, as well as communicate with UASI partners effortlessly,” said David Weldon, Catawba County Emergency Services Director. “In addition to daily coordination, E Team provides the platform necessary for supporting specific events at the nuclear power plants on both sides of the North/South Carolina border, including joint training exercises and federally-mandated drills. We now have the ability to coordinate efforts and share vital information throughout the UASI Region and across state borders.”

## More about NC4

NC4's Situational Readiness solutions are a suite of integrated applications that revolutionize how government and businesses collect, manage, share and disseminate information to mitigate risks, manage incidents, and securely communicate and collaborate with one another. Aggregating and integrating information from public and private sources, NC4 leverages its cutting-edge technologies to bring users a highly customized presentation of relevant information in a single, easy to use console.

NC4 has a number of solutions that address the specific needs of corporate security, business continuity, enterprise risk management, supply chain management, travel management, crisis management, emergency management, intelligence fusion and law enforcement, as well as for federal agencies with a need to share critical information across organizational boundaries.

To learn more about how NC4 can benefit your organization, visit [www.NC4.us](http://www.NC4.us) or call 877-624-4999.