

Partners in Preparedness

In Florida, a partnership of city and county Emergency Management agencies, and NC4, provider of the incident management system E Team, have successfully transformed the region's capabilities in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies and disasters.

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Florida's Governor and the Department of Law Enforcement established seven task forces throughout the state. Florida's Regional Domestic Security Task Force for Region 5 represents 9 counties in the east-central region of the state, an area that includes the cities of Orlando and Daytona Beach as well as popular tourist destinations such as the Kennedy Space Center and the Walt Disney World vacation area. Although originally set up to respond to terrorist threats, the Task Force also responds to all other emergencies and disasters, including frequent hurricanes and tropical storms.

The Chair of the Task Force recognized for several years that one significant weakness in the region's preparedness and response capabilities was the lack of a common incident management system in the state for gathering and sharing information and requesting or offering support/resources from neighboring or nearby cities, towns and counties. Some counties already had sophisticated data systems, some had less than ideal systems, and some had no system other than pens and paper. Needless to say, none of these systems were compatible with one another.

Funding and procurement

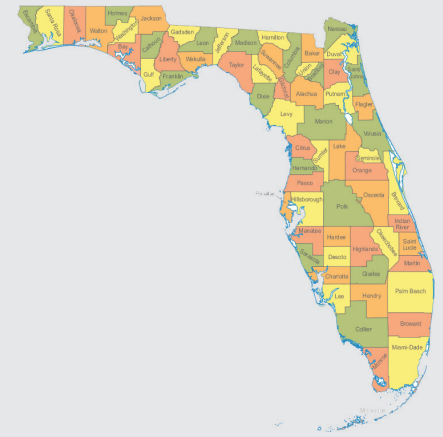
The Task Force identified a key source of funding: the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), which ultimately provided funding for 5 of the 9 jurisdictions that were part of the Task Force region. The core funding was complemented with money from the Task Force budget itself, and aligning all funds together, the Task Force was able to form an efficient means for acquiring a new, common system for a large and vulnerable section of Florida.

The Task Force selected NC4's E Team incident management system, which enables cities and counties to share volumes of data and collaborate instantly on emergency issues such as mutual aid, specific material, equipment and personnel needs, and situation updates.

Proven data sharing and collaboration

NC4's E Team system provides collaboration capabilities that are vital in a wide range of situations. At any stage of a crisis, county and local governments, government agencies, hospitals, facilities such as theme parks, and non-governmental organizations – in short, anyone provided with access to E Team – can share any information relevant to an emergency or disaster, such as situational reports, resource requests, and offers of assistance.

Situational Readiness



Florida Task Force

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 collaborative information system that allows jurisdictions to share information 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

Given the location of the Task Force, the system is essential to the preparation for and response to hurricanes and tropical storms. Here's an example of how E Team benefits a region:

A category 3 hurricane is heading for Florida's East coast, and the State has issued an evacuation order for Brevard County. The E Team system enables Brevard County to share information about evacuation routes and temporary shelter with the inland counties and cities so that the neighboring jurisdictions can anticipate and respond to likely traffic flows. The inland jurisdictions, say, the City of Orlando, can then provide situational reports back to Brevard County to let them know what assistance is available, and how traffic is moving.

Other types of information that can be shared include any information about bridge or road closures, offers of shelter for evacuees, or the need to procure new traffic signs and countless other issues that can be seen immediately by everyone in the region.

E Team provides a common operational view of an incident through a browser-based, user-friendly interface. E Team can be used for:

- ☰ Tracking & managing incidents & events
- ☰ Gathering & sharing critical information
- ☰ Assessing impact on critical infrastructure
- ☰ Determining response capabilities across organizations
- ☰ Notifying & alerting key parties involved in the response
- ☰ Executing procedures & protocols
- ☰ Coordinating a multi-agency response
- ☰ Requesting, deploying & tracking assets & resources

Potential for replication

The potential for replication is great. This can be done anywhere in the country. It requires the following:

- ☰ Foresight of emergency managers to understand the huge benefits of regional collaboration before, during and following a severe incident or disaster
- ☰ Creative use of federal and state grants
- ☰ Leadership to bring partners together
- ☰ Strong belief that optimum capability to protect citizens can only be achieved through a common incident management system, one that promotes collaboration, information sharing and **true partnerships in emergency management.**

Situational Readiness

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 or call 877-624-4999.

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