

# REGION 2 BI-WEEKLY

Volume 1, Issue 24

Aug. 28, 2009

## IMAT to USVI; Preparedness Gains

Two weeks ago, Tropical Storm Ana prompted the first deployment of Region II's Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT) to the US Virgin Islands. While the storm ultimately bypassed the islands, the IMAT team confronted the logistics of emergency response there, working with the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) to identify shortfalls that may cause problems in future responses.

Areas that VITEMA identified as needing assistance were the Incident Command System and the National Incident Management System. These concepts are new to the island agencies. To help representatives better understand these concepts and how they would integrate into a larger response, members of the IMAT held a facilitated group discussion, breaking up the agencies into smaller groups based on their roles in Operations, Logistics, Planning, and Fi-

organize the structure of their Emergency Operations Center on St. Thomas, with the goal of leveraging the work done on St. Thomas's EOC structure to reorganize the EOCs on St. Croix and St. John.

The IMAT team also met VITEMA managers of other EOCs in the Territory, discussing areas of con-



cern, the politics that may affect future responses, and identifying key players on each island. Team members also scouted suitable sites for Joint Field Offices, Disaster Recovery Centers, Initial Operating Facilities and Incident Support Bases for future disasters.

In addition to working with VITEMA, the IMAT used this opportunity to plan with other Federal partners that were deployed to the Territory in anticipation of the storm, including the Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Health and Human Services, and US Forest Fire. IMAT met with these agencies and discussed responsibilities, capabilities, and logistical needs in the event of an agency deployment. With input from these Emergency Support Functions, the IMAT began creating a two-tiered timeline to be used as a template for a phased, modular deployment to the USVI based on projected (anticipated) storm conditions.

While Ana ultimately passed with only a small amount of rain, Region II's IMAT used their time in the Virgin Islands to shore up the Territory's preparedness for future disasters.



nance.

IMAT members used their experience in other disasters to talk the agencies through their roles and responsibilities, and discussed areas in which the agencies themselves had identified as vulnerabilities. Alternative solutions were examined, and the agencies were encouraged to look towards agreements with other agencies within the Territory, as well as agreements with other states through Emergency Management Assistance Compacts. The IMAT Planning Section used these discussions to help VITEMA re-

# TROPICAL ANA STORM A DRY RUN



As Tropical Storm Ana pelted the Caribbean with rain, emergency response preparations continued, with public affairs officers from PREMA , Region II and other federal partners (above) attending a presentation by Deputy Director of Public Affairs Dan Stoneking (left) on Puerto Rico's Strategic Communications Plan. Earlier in the week, Stoneking meet with USVI Gov. deJongh (center, below) to work through details of the Plan for the USVI.



# GETTING MONEY OUT THE DOOR

In response to the county's unprecedented fiscal crisis, Congress passed the stimulus act, a.k.a. the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 (Public Law 111-5), to repair infrastructure while spurring local economies. The act set aside \$210 million to fund the construction and modification of local fire stations. Administered by the Assistance to Firefighters Program Office under FEMA's Grant Programs Directorate, the money is awarded directly to the fire departments on a competitive basis.

Getting out word of the available funds, Grants Manager Flora Moy and External Affairs Director Kristina Simpson set up a series of conference calls with Region II's Congressional delegations. Acting Regional Administrator Mike Moriarty spoke to 82 NJ mayors and fire chiefs on a call set up by Senator Robert Menendez's staff. The call was designed to answer questions and provide guidance to the Fire Service in preparing their grant applications for the 2009 Fire Station Construction Grant Program.

After the call, the senator's Deputy Chief of Staff Kellie Drakeford singled out Region II's Fire Grants Specialist Dave Gronsbell for the call's fast-paced professionalism, noting, "What was also very impressive was the follow up and initiative Dave took in responding to the many questions that came up after the question and answer period. In addition to the questions that came up during the call, Dave further responded to emails from the various municipalities. Needless to say, this went far in ensuring we were engaged and were serious about providing technical assistance to this important constituency group."

Way to go, Dave!

## ¡Buen trabajo!

The president of the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (NOVAD) cited the stellar translation work of the CAD's External Affairs team in translating into Spanish their signature publication, ***Disaster Spiritual Care Points of Consensus***. This makes NOVAD's vital guidance available to Spanish speaking communities nationwide.

# FACES OF THE REGION



## An Open Letter from Will Bodt

Greetings to all my fellow emergency managers!

I began working at the Defense Coordinating Element here in Region II in mid July. The last four years of my professional life included various positions with prominent Defense contractors, the last being one who provided subject matter expertise in readiness reporting for the State Joint Force Headquarters (National Guard) in Region II. This position provided situational awareness and familiarity with our emergency management partners in Region II. In January 2009, I completed a Masters Degree in Emergency and Disaster Management at Metropolitan College in New York City. It was a challenging and rewarding program. I encourage everyone to seek higher education for growth and prosperity.

The 24 years I spent on active duty with the National Guard in New York provided me with a solid foundation for my new career as an emergency manager. The combination of this experience, coupled with the superb staff here in Region II, has enabled eased my transition into the team. I want to thank everyone for all their warm welcome and support in this transition.

I have been married to my wife Cathy for over 17 years, having been together for a total of 21. We have a great little 8 month old dog (no kids) name Oreo. He is a gem and we love him dearly. Cathy spends her time crafting pottery, scouting talent for a public ballet school and taking care of Oreo. We love Central Park and cherish our NY digs.

# A SMALL WORLD... AFTER ALL



Joe Galinis (top left) served in 1968 in northern South Vietnam at Camp Carroll with the 12<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment, an artillery unit.

Bill Douglass (center left) served in 1968 as a rifle platoon commander with the Third Marine Regiment, covering territory along the demilitarized zone north of Camp Carroll.

Camp Carroll frequently received incoming artillery from North Vietnam and from within the DMZ. Joe's unit routinely returned fire, often succeeding in silencing the enemy guns.

But some incoming artillery was more troublesome, coming from towering Dong Ha Mountain, some 1,000 yards due north of Camp Carroll. One or two rounds would be fired at a time, leaving little time for Joe's unit to zero in on the location of the gun.

In mid-1968, Bill Douglass's unit headed for Camp Carroll for what was called a "sheep dip" : hot food, showers, new boots, etc. The next morning they climbed Dong Ha Mountain to find the artillery piece. Bill's platoon was the point.

Up they climbed, until Douglass's lead squad leader came back to say they had found the piece, buried in the floor of a small bunker; its aperture looked straight at Camp Carroll. That ended the incoming fire from Dong Ha Mountain. That gun is now displayed at the Marine Corp Museum in Quantico, Va. (below).



Bill and Joe (left) began comparing notes on Dong Ha Mountain and its howitzer two years ago, when their paths crossed again at 26 Federal Plaza.

