

# DISASTERCOM



DERA Newsletter

43 Years of Service

March 2005



## DERA Awards

Gold Coin Awards were presented to all three speakers at our annual meeting this year. Left to right, Pastor Doug Douglas, DERA Haiti Project Team Leader, Dr. Charles Harpole, VU4 Team operator for Tsunami Communications, Mr. Kevin Smith, Disaster Services Director for the Salvation Army Florida Hurricane Reponse and Catherine Lawhun, DERA.

## DERA partner EIIP hosts forum on Volunteer Management

Principles and concepts were developed by the Volunteer Management Committee of National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) as a basis for developing a national strategy on working with unaffiliated volunteers. Guest speakers were **Ande Miller**, Executive Director of NVOAD and **Susan Jensen**, Voluntary Agency Liaison, FEMA Region V, both of whom serve on the Volunteer Management Committee.

(Transcript at [www.emforum.org](http://www.emforum.org))

## Commendation from the desk of the Lt. Governor of Andaman Islands

To the eleven volunteers of the National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR) who were providentially present on the islands on December 26th when the deadly earthquake and Tsunami struck.

VU4 Team leader

Mrs. D. Bharathi Prasad – VU2RBI

S. Ram Mohan – VU2MYH

Jose Jacob – VU2JOS

Sarath Babu – VU2RSB

D.V.R.K. Murthy – VU2DVO

K.V. Prashanth - SWL

Mr. Mishra – Army Signals

S.R. Ram – VU2LIC

D.V. Satyanarayana – VU2DSV

Sushil K. Dhingra – VU2LFA and

Chaitanya Kumar – VU2MCK

## Take off those shoes



### THIS IS WHY WE TAKE SHOES OFF AT THE AIRPORT.

According to Aerospace Week & Space Technology, this is what about 200 grams of Semtex (Combloc C4) will do to a Boeing 747 pressurized at 9 PSI to simulate an altitude of 30000 feet. That's about 6.5 ounces of explosive, enough to fill the spaces around a pair of feet in shoes.

## President's Award



## Cadet Venzian

PARKVILLE, MISSOURI -- Cadet Tech Sgt. Kristin Venzian has been awarded a Gold (highest) level President's Volunteer Service Award for 250+ hours of volunteer community service during 2004. She is a sophomore at Park Hill South High School with a GPA of 4.0. Cadet Venzian is a member of the Platte Valley Squadron's Color Guard Team. Along with her younger sisters she founded Kids Celebrate Soldiers, an effort to send thank you cards from kids around the US to American soldiers. ([www.kidscelebrate.org](http://www.kidscelebrate.org)) Kristin was recently awarded the Civil Air Patrol Solo Wings after she flew solo in December 2004. "Volunteerism is a special interest of mine, and I want to prove that kids can make a difference in the community and the world." Cadet Venzian said.

DisasterCom is the quarterly newsletter of DERA International. News items and articles are always welcome.

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Editor: Catherine Lawhun

Membership in this Nonprofit Association is open to all who share our commitment to effective disaster preparedness and response.

See Back Page for Membership Application

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## **DERA International**

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Longmont, CO 80502

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E I I P



## **Special DISCOUNT for DERA Members**

The Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response Association has partnered with Edwards Information Publishing Company to provide free shipping and handling for their Disaster Recovery Yellow Pages (DRYP). DRYP is the disaster industry's standard sourcebook for disaster recovery resources and contains over 3,100 vendor listings and 355 vendor categories including trauma counselors, salvage, emergency rentals, storm damage restoration, disaster planning, and more.

All DisasterCOM Newsletter readers who purchase copies of DRYP will receive \$20 off a book or CD-Rom and \$30 off a combo order when using offer code DERA. See Advertisement in the center of this issue.

To take advantage of this special offer and get additional information about DRYP please visit their website at <http://www.thedryp.com/promo.asp?ofrcode=DERA>.

Thank you all so much for your support.  
Your editor,

Catherine Lawhun

*President of  
Many Waters Resource Network, Inc.  
providing volunteer engineering  
professionals for disaster response  
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## **Salvation Army housing project for 1,000 families launched by Prime Minister of Sri Lanka**

On Sunday 6 February 2005 the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Mr Mahinda Rajapakshe, laid the foundation stone for The Salvation Army's Galagoda Wattha housing project in the Galle district of that country. This will see an entire community created for 1,000 families. It will include houses, community centers, a medical clinic, playgrounds, income generation opportunities and other community infrastructure.

## **RedR provides access to Over 150 Technical Experts providing help to Humanitarian Workers**

RedR India have 17 people in the field, in Sri Lanka, Indonesia and India. RedR India members are working with agencies like OxfamGB, WHO, Christian Children's Fund. Most of these are water and sanitary engineers and health promoters who are performing a rapid needs assessment in the Andaman and Nicobar islands. RedR India has assisted Oxfam in Needs Assessment in Andaman, South India and Sri Lanka.

RedR India also provides free technical support service (TSS) via e-mail, to all humanitarian agencies and aid workers.

One of the many initiatives they operate is a Technical Support Service (TSS), which exists to provide free effective technical advice to humanitarian agencies and aid workers when on relief assignments in the field.

The TSS enables humanitarian personnel to access a network of technical experts who are well placed to research and provide detailed advice on a wide range of questions. For more information visit:

[www.redr.org/redr/support/TSS/index.htm](http://www.redr.org/redr/support/TSS/index.htm)

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# DERA SPECIAL SESSION AT THE INTERNATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE 2005

By Lisa Emmerich | Sentinel Staff Writer  
Posted February 6, 2005

Florida has a lot to learn from the recent tsunami and the summer's hurricanes when it comes to preparation and readiness for the next big disaster.

That's the message community leaders helped spread Saturday evening at the Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response Association's forum.

"We cannot prepare for another Hurricane Andrew," said J. Kevin Smith, Emergency Disaster Services Director for the Salvation Army's Florida division. "We cannot prepare for another 9-11. We have to prepare for what we never expect. And when we think that we're ready, go back and start over again."



Kevin Smith, DERA Award recipient, gives presentation on lessons learned during Florida Hurricanes.

Dr. Charles Harpole, an amateur radio operator and professor at the University of Central Florida, spoke about his experience with the tsunami in India. Harpole was visiting the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal between India and Thailand when the massive waves hit. He was there to set up a ham-radio station on the islands.

In the hours after the disaster, Harpole and his fellow amateur-radio specialists relayed messages to the Indian mainland that those on the island were safe. Indian government officials got word of the radio operators and sent requests for medicines, water and blankets. One of the things he learned from surviving the tsunami is that language barriers can be a problem. Harpole encouraged Florida's English- and Spanish-speaking ham-radio operators to work out a system that would allow them to work together.

## LiDAR

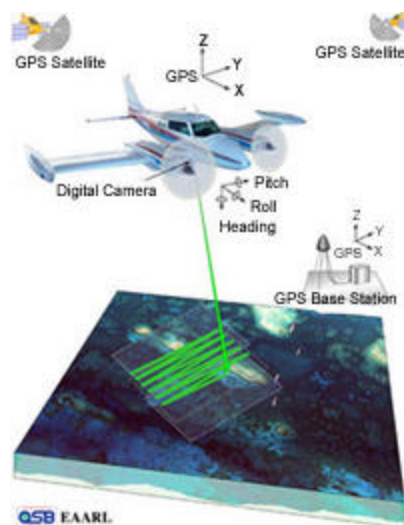
### Technology assists in EVACUATION PLANNING

Experts at the Disasters Roundtable held in March at The National Academies brought up a number of key issues.

One factor that makes evacuation planning difficult is outdated flood plain maps, said Dr. Earl J. Baker, a Florida State University professor whose research includes human response to environmental hazards. But there is good news on the horizon - a new type of surface radar is helping emergency managers map out ground levels so they know where to place evacuation shelters and just who should be evacuated.

Lidar stands for light detecting and ranging. The United States Geological Survey (USGS), in partnership with NASA and NOAA, is using this technology to map coastal topography more rapidly than ever before.

As the aircraft flies along the coast, a laser altimeter scans a several-hundred-meter-wide swath of the earth's surface acquiring an estimate of ground elevation every few square meters. Used in conjunction with standard GPS based surveying to provide control and ground truthing, the LiDAR data is able to provide many square miles of data in a fraction of the time a standard survey can process similar amounts of data collected on the ground.



USGS also combines GPS-controlled pre- and post-storm aerial photography to document coastal changes and to assist in interpreting the laser altimetry data.

## DERA Trained & Certified Key Responders in Tsunami

Several years ago, DERA member Suri Ram Mohan, came to the US and assisted with DERA operations for an entire year. During that time he received much training and was later certified as an emergency response specialist. Ram was part of the VU4 Team who were on an expedition to the Andaman Islands when the Tsunami struck.

Mohan rushed to the Chief of Administration immediately after the earthquake to alert them at great risk to himself, as the road that he traveled on was later hit by the tsunami waves.

Mr. S. Suri, Executive Director of the National Institute of Amateur Radio (India), wrote, "We acknowledge that the training he got from DERA in USA and certification by DERA has come in handy in this major natural calamity in the world. Let every one know about it in the world please."

Ram was later escorted by Indian government officials to set up communications stations on other islands that were severely damaged by the wave and were without any means of conveying their needs to the administration.



From Left to Right: Mr. S.Ram Mohan, VU2MYH, Mr. S.B.Ram, VU2LIC, Dr. Shrikant Jichkar. His Excellency Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam, receiving NIAR's Proposals from Mr.S.Suri, VU2MY, Executive Director of N.I.A.R. and Mrs.Bharathi Prasad, VU2RBI, Mr.P.V.S.N.Sastry, VU2SCO, Dr. Pankaj Chande. Vice-Chancellor, Kavikulaguru Kalidas Sanskrit University, Nagpur.

## HAZMAT NEWS

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established a nationally standardized manifest form that will replace various state formats. The new form will be phased in over the next 18 months. More information is available at [www.epa.gov/epaoswer/hazwaste/gener/manifest/mods.htm](http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/hazwaste/gener/manifest/mods.htm)



## ASCE Teams Studying Effects of Tsunami

Three technical teams, comprised of ASCE and Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) members, traveled to South Asia to study the catastrophic damage resulting from the recent earthquake and tsunami. The teams investigated the specific causes of failure in some structures and the elements that allowed some structures to survive. The teams departed for the region Jan. 30-31 and returned Feb. 9. The following excerpts are taken from field reports now available on the ASCE Web site.

ASCE team members are comprised of members of the Coasts, Oceans, Ports and Rivers Institute (COPRI) and the Technical Council on Lifelines Earthquake Engineering (TCLEE).

**Curtis Edwards, P.E., Vice President, Pountney Psomas – Thailand Team Leader reported:**

The navy base near Khao Lak was severely flooded by the tsunami. Forty to fifty reinforced concrete power poles were knocked over by the wave surge carrying debris. They were repaired and replaced within one week. A water line crossing a drainage channel was also broken and replaced within one week. The main water treatment plant was flooded, causing damage to the control panels and a number of pumps. These were all replaced with temporary pumps and controls within two weeks. The power generation station for the ships on the dock -- 220 to 380 volts -- was severely damaged, its control panels knocked over and swept into the bay. It is not functional to this day.

**From Dr. Robert (Tony) Dalrymple, P.E., Professor of Civil Engineering, Johns Hopkins University – Thailand Team:**

Khao Lak, a new upscale resort area north of Phuket, was completely devastated by a 10-meter-high wave. Resort infrastructure was almost completely destroyed. All hotels are closed for extensive repair. Foundations were scoured, walls collapsed by wave pressure, and roof tiles removed by wave impact. Damage was severe to both first and second-floor apartments. Nonetheless, the beach, which was severely eroded by the tsunami, is recovering rapidly in this area. At least 100 feet of beach has been accreted naturally since December 26. Many damaged hotels are now being demolished; others stand like ghost towns. A fishing port—Ban Nam Ken, north of Khao Lak—suffered extensive

damage to concrete piers, and nearly all of the fishing fleet was either destroyed in place or washed a kilometer inland.

**John Headland, P.E., Principal, Moffatt & Nichol – Sri Lanka COPRI Team Leader last report on Feb 4, 2004**

We traveled to the Island of Kinnyai. This island is one of many that have formed at the mouth of the Mahaweli Ganga delta. Access to the island is provided by an ingeniously efficient ferry system comprised of simple barges powered by outboard engines. The island itself was populated by 84,000 residents, of whom 480 perished during the tsunami. The damage was widespread, and included loss of the coastal roadway and many, many buildings, as we had seen elsewhere on previous days. We offered a ride to a local policeman who described the tsunami as a small initial wave followed by a 40-foot wall of black water as high as the palm trees. He also mentioned that houses within 0.5 km of the shoreline were damaged, while the inundation penetrated about 2.5 km.

We left Kinnyai Island late in the day and traveled from Trincomalee to Anuradhapura during an extended period of extraordinary twilight over a very rough road. This road took us through the least-populated areas of our trip. Early along the way, we encountered a series of elephant herds; a special, unexpected treat.



This day ends our technical emprise. We have witnessed the aftermath of immense human suffering. We have vastly extended our understanding of the devastating impacts of tsunami waves. We have observed the tsunami-induced morphological changes to tidal inlets and man-made engineering works (e.g., bridges and causeways). We have gained new knowledge and we have had our basic knowledge dramatically reinforced. We have learned that flooding and resultant loss of life are related to land elevation; that basic education of tsunami wave and flood phenomena will save lives; that flood-zone mapping and the development of vertical or horizontal evacuation routes (either to high ground or away from the shore) will save lives;

and that buildings must be properly built. We have learned that wave heights change dramatically from place to place; that the lee side of an island nation can be significantly affected by a tsunami; that tsunamis can penetrate well inland; and that beaches, palm trees, and certain overtopped structures--such as seawalls and other stout wall structures (e.g. Dutch Fort in Galle)--can withstand a tsunami.

One can imagine that investment in such trips and their subsequent documentation will serve to spread knowledge of natural coastal disasters. It can only be hoped that the lessons learned from such efforts will lead to a better understanding of the important issues that face-and a safer world for those who rely upon-COPRI members.

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## FireCorps

Washington, DC – The Fire Corps partners announced the official launch of the Fire Corps program on December 9, 2004. Fire Corps was created to support fire departments across the country by leveraging community volunteer efforts to handle non-emergency activities. Actively involving citizens in a non-emergency role will enable highly trained fire service personnel to focus more fully on acute emergency tasks. What's more, citizen advocates will help expand educational outreach to all residents about ways in which they can help protect themselves, their families, and their communities from fire hazards. Fire Corps will also educate fire departments and fire service organizations on how to involve citizens in these non-emergency activities.

Fire Corps is coordinated nationally by the National Volunteer Fire Council and is a Program Partner of Citizen Corps, the Department of Homeland Security's grass-roots effort to actively involve everyone in making communities across America safer, stronger, and better prepared for emergencies of all kinds. Please visit [www.firecorps.org](http://www.firecorps.org) to learn more about Fire Corps.

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## U.S. Citizens Corps

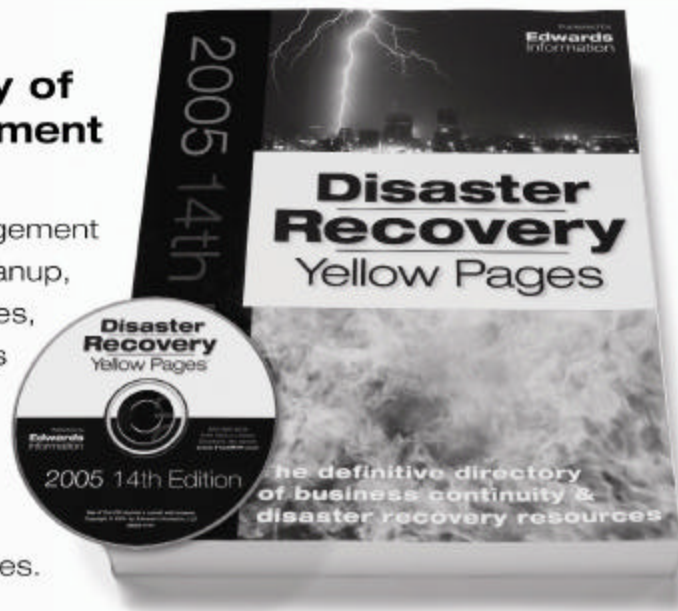
Numbers of Citizen Corps Councils around the country are growing! As of Feb 15<sup>th</sup>, 2005, there are 1,554 Councils nationwide.  
[http://www.citizencorps.gov/doc/2005\\_02\\_15\\_email.do](http://www.citizencorps.gov/doc/2005_02_15_email.do)

# The unthinkable has happened and everyone is looking to you for help.

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*See DERA Discount offer on Page 2*



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## 13<sup>th</sup> Annual VOAD Conference

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## RECOVERY EFFORTS ONGOING SIX MONTHS AFTER IVAN

FEMA/Florida News Desk

—In the wake of “Ivan the Terrible” visiting Florida’s Panhandle area six months ago, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) continues its efforts to revive impacted coastal cities and communities.

FEMA migrated its Florida efforts westward, deploying more than 4,500 personnel to assist in hurricane response and recovery efforts for the state. In conjunction with the State Emergency Response Team (SERT), an Area Field Office also was established in Pensacola.

Ivan was the state’s third deadly hurricane in less than five weeks; 30 fatalities are attributed to the disaster. Insurance experts estimate Ivan as the third costliest hurricane in U.S. history with \$7.1 billion in damages from Alabama and Florida northward through North Carolina and New York.

A breakdown of the amounts and types of disaster assistance provided to date in Florida because of Hurricane Ivan is as follows:

- More than 151,000 individuals registered for state and federal assistance;

- Disaster Medical Assistance Teams treated 3,339 patients;
- 56 shelters were set up to hold 33,472 individuals at its peak;
- More than 25 voluntary and faith-based agencies, some from as far away as Iowa, Minnesota and Michigan, have been working to help disaster-impacted Floridians;
- Volunteers distributed 2.96 million meals;
- 97,700 tarps were distributed to individuals, and volunteers and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers covered more than 51,000 roofs with plastic sheeting; and
- More than 104,000 housing inspections have been completed.

## BPL in an International context

The problem lies in the plans for Broadband over Power Lines (BPL) that have already been approved by in the US by the Federal Communications Commission, and are set to be approved by governments in other industrialized countries in Europe - where the technology is better known as Power Line Communications (PLC) - Australia and the Far East.

### **Broadcasters should be more proactive**

The international broadcasters could and should be doing more to draw attention to this threat. Radio Netherlands has been one of only a handful of international broadcasters in Europe that have regularly attended meetings to discuss BPL/PLC. Others have been urged to get involved, but have not done so. It has given the pro-BPL/PLC lobby the impression that shortwave is not regarded as terribly important by most of Europe's international broadcasters.

But it's too early to back away from the fight. In general, amateur radio organizations have been much more proactive than the broadcasters in making a cogent case against the widespread introduction of BPL technology. They will continue their lobbying, and indeed one hopes that the governments of countries affected by the tsunami disaster will get behind them, having seen what a vital role shortwave can still play in dealing with disasters. Let's hope that in 2005, some more of the broadcasters wake up and smell the coffee.

The link below from Radio Netherlands - BPL & EmComm in Sri Lanka - should be required reading, listening and listening for every ham and more than a few politicians!

Not only does the article point out the international problems associated with BPL, it clearly shows that the concern is not unique to Amateur Radio Operators and certainly not just here in the USA.

While reading the article be sure to click on the box to hear the audio from the radio show. You'll hear it for yourself!

[www2.rnw.nl/rnw/en/features/media/feature/bpl050127.html](http://www2.rnw.nl/rnw/en/features/media/feature/bpl050127.html)

Some technical fixes may be in the works though (see "Aiming high" below). The BBC, for instance, is developing a PLC modem that makes use of the fact that the short-wave frequencies for broadcast radio change throughout the day, as ionospheric conditions dictate. The BBC modem detects which frequency bands are in use at any one time - and filters them out. Such technology is not part of any PLC or BPL system currently in trials, however.

From issue 2482 of New Scientist magazine, 15 January 2005, page 26

## Aiming high



Corridor Systems of Santa Rosa, California, thinks it has hit on a way to set up an interference-free power-line internet service. It plans to use overhead power lines to carry data at frequencies between 800 megahertz and 10 gigahertz, way above the amateur radio and conventional power-line communications band and, which it will send in an outer power conductor.

Thanks to the "surface wave" effect, in which signals launched straight



down a cable tend to stay inside the cable, near the surface, Corridor's system will not generate radio waves that might interfere with mobile phones at these frequencies. For the final link into subscribers' homes they will use very low-power radio transmitters, like those used for Wi-Fi hotspots, which will be fixed to the nearest power cable.

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## DHS Seeks \$20M for Toxic Chemical Detection

By John M. Doyle

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is requesting \$20 million to develop a warning and ID system for chemical agents whose vapor pressure is too low to be detected by conventional measures.

Plans for the Low Volatility Agent Warning System were included in DHS fiscal 2006 budget documents. The effort is the latest by the DHS to address the issue of toxic chemicals and hazardous materials.

Last month's train wreck in South Carolina that released a toxic cloud of chlorine -- killing nine, sickening hundreds and forcing thousands to evacuate -- has refocused attention on the transport of hazardous materials, or hazmat, in or near U.S. cities.

The DHS Science and Technology Directorate wants to establish in fiscal 2005 the Chemical Security Analysis Center to provide threat awareness and assessment of current and emerging chemical threat materials. The center will also initiate prototype development for a mobile laboratory that can rapidly analyze a large number of samples in the field.

After the South Carolina incident, the U.S. Conference of Mayors wrote the DHS requesting a national notification system that would let mayors know when hazmat shipments come through their cities (HSD, Jan. 20).

Acting DHS Secretary James Loy said he understood the concerns and said the DHS would work to find "common ground" with the mayors "out of our critical infrastructure branch, in the Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection Directorate."

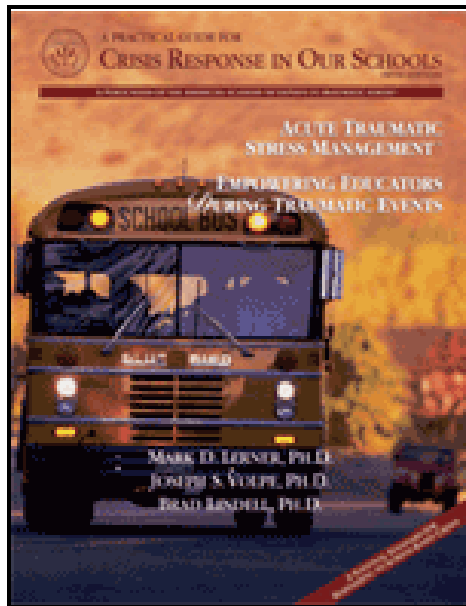
Loy said the magnitude of the issue -- all the different types of products labeled hazmat and all the modes of transportation used to move them --

"makes it an enormously complex challenge, but we will take it on."

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## New Publication by the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress

**A Practical Guide for Crisis Response in Our Schools: Fifth Edition** conveys critical information to assist schools in responding effectively to "everyday crises" as well as school-based disasters. It is an invaluable resource for administrators, support personnel and faculty.



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## Pets in Disasters

Summary of a 2004 Natural Hazards Quick Report by Leslie Irvine:  
"Providing for Pets During Disasters: An Exploratory Study."  
By David Talbot

When emergency managers develop response plans for various contingencies, they may not put very high priority on the care of pets. However, various studies have shown that failures to incorporate the needs of pets can lead to additional risks in a disaster response. A 2001 study found that as many as 20% of residents will refuse to evacuate an area because they won't want to leave their pets. After a hazardous materials incident in Wisconsin, so many evacuated residents were illegally reentering their homes to retrieve their pets that the State EOC had to organize a separate pet evacuation for the area,

with help from the National Guard. There is an additional fear (though possibly unfounded) that dogs will form aggressive packs when they are abandoned.

Disaster responses in past years neglected to care for animals during the preparations and relief effort. As recently as 1998, it was common for animal shelters to euthanize vast numbers of healthy, adoptable pets in preparation for a hurricane, in order to free space for incoming animals. Approximately 1000 adoptable dogs and cats were euthanized after Hurricane Andrew simply for lack of space.

However, emergency managers have been increasingly including animals in their response plans. FEMA and the Red Cross have designated a network of national organizations to meet the needs of animals after a disaster. The Veterinary Medical Assistance Team (VMAT) of the American Veterinary Medical Association is often designated as the lead agency for the care of livestock in a national response, while the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) is often designated as the lead agency responsible for pets. Additionally, several states have developed State and County Animal Response Teams (SARTs and CARTs) that follow the Incident Command System to provide for pets at the local level.

This Quick Report focused on the pet response to Hurricane Charlie in Charlotte County, Florida. In this response, organizations were successful in evacuating all pets from local animal shelters and distributing them to other shelters, secure areas, or to volunteers before the hurricane landed. When they requested national aid, HSUS arrived with two dozen volunteers one day after the storm and established an emergency pet shelter. The county placed pet-related information with listings of available disaster services and the shelter collected over 100 animals.

Leslie Irvine commended the interorganizational coordination of this pet response. Seeing how the pet responders themselves were affected by the hurricane, she recommended establishing back-up teams of volunteer pet responders. She also recommends increasing the number of pet-friendly shelters, such as those built in fairgrounds where the facilities needed to house animals are already available. When compared to the response after Hurricane Andrew, the pet response to Charlie was quite successful and no animals had to be euthanized for lack of space.

