



**Hurricane Isaac, FEMA Region IV  
August 26-30, 2012  
ESF 11 After Action Report (AAR)**



---

**Incident Summary**

The ESF11 Coordinator was activated to the FEMA Region IV Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC) from August 26-30, 2012 in response to Hurricane Isaac and the storm's possible impacts on FEMA Region IV states on the Gulf coast. This activation was under a Florida surge account Mission Assignment (MA). Florida (FL), Mississippi (MS), and Alabama (AL) were all impacted but Mississippi received the most extensive damage in Region IV. Flooding, not wind damage was the most significant issue in Region IV. ESF11 was released subject to recall Aug 30<sup>th</sup>, and formally demobilized September 6, 2012.

**Lessons Learned**

**Successful Area:** USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Southeast Regional Office (SERO) provided their usual exceptional and responsive support. FNS provided USDA Inventories and quickly responded to inquiries from the affected states and FEMA. FNS has well established partnerships which ensured proactive support to Region IV states and FEMA. Additional ESF11 staff was not needed, but several trained APHIS desk officers volunteered to assist.

The ability to monitor "Web EOC" at the Region IV RRCC did help gain additional situational awareness but less than expected because the FEMA RRCC could not monitor any state Web EOC postings.

Efforts to promote early communications between MS USDA agencies and the FEMA Incident Management Team (IMAT) assigned to the MS Emergency Operations Center (EOC) were successful and hopefully minimized FEMA requests for USDA MS Joint Field Office (JFO) staffing.

**Improvement Area:** After released from RRCC staffing, on Saturday September 1<sup>st</sup> the ESF11 coordinator was called by the FEMA IMAT in MS and informed there was a request for assistance from Hancock County EOC to assist with nutria carcass removal. The IMAT was informed FEMA national planning documents this assistance is designated to the Army Corps of Engineers and USDA has no statutory authority to respond without a MA from FEMA. Additionally the Mississippi EOC had already sent the request back to the county providing assistance from the MS Department of Health rather than forward this request up to FEMA. In this instance FEMA IMAT was injecting itself inappropriately and needed to wait and let the required request for assistance process work its way up the approval chain consistent with FEMA guidance.

FEMA's ability to monitor Web EOC was problematic because FEMA's IMAT was too proactive by getting involved early and did not let the county requests for assistance process up the system as it should.

If staffing requirements were to increase significantly, it could be overwhelming. APHIS could develop reserve programs for emergency personnel, perhaps similar to the VS NAERC or FEMA DAEs. Another system exists at the USDA Forest Service where certain retirees are designated as AD (Administratively Determined) and are available to be called up for emergency response activities as contractors.