



**Typhoon Soudelor - Saipan
Island in the Commonwealth of the
Northern Marianas Islands (CNMI)
August 6-30, 2015
After Action Report (AAR)**



INCIDENT SUMMARY

On August 1-3 Typhoon Soudelor passed directly over Saipan as a Category 2 Typhoon and knocked out all electrical power on the island with official recorded wind speeds exceeding 200+ mph. On August 5th a Presidential Disaster declaration was signed for CNMI (Saipan) for Public Assistance (Categories A {Debris Removal} & B {Emergency Protective Measures}), Individual Assistance, and Hazard Mitigation under FEMA-4235-DR-MP.

At 2000PDT on August 6th, ESF11 was notified of activation by mission assignment issuance from FEMA RIX to USDA. ESF11 notified partners, stakeholders, and leadership of the activation, an APHIS accounting code was created by the APHIS Mission Assignment Manager, and Travel Authorization was approved by close of business.

FEMA RIX ESF11 Coordinator arrived on Guam on August 9th ChST (all times reported from this point forward are local time zone). All deployed personnel remained on Guam, as directed by FEMA, as billeting was extremely limited on Saipan. On August 10th ESF11 met with all local partners (APHIS PPQ and WS programs, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency, Rural Development, Territorial Veterinarian, and Homeland Security Department) on Guam to re-establish communication, update contacts, and provide a briefing on T. Soudelor's impacts. Orders to proceed to Saipan, via a chartered flight for all response personnel, was received on August 10th and ESF11 checked into CNMI's Emergency Operations Center/Initial Operating Facility on August 11th.

On Saturday (15AUG15) CNMI Emergency Management issued a Condition of Readiness (COR) Level 2 order for all personnel and reduced Emergency Operations Center personnel to essential staff only, in preparation for Typhoon GONI, expected to impact the island. On Sunday (16AUG15), CNMI upgraded the significance to Condition of Readiness Level 1 with Typhoon GONI passing over the Island of Saipan as a Category 1 Typhoon. Although significant winds of 75+ mph and rainfall, no additional damage was reported.

On 18AUG15 the Initial Operating Facility transitioned operations to the Joint Field Office at a nearby location to accommodate over 150 deployed personnel. The ESF11 Coordinator requested additional resources, via APHIS Dispatch, to support the activation. An ESF11 Desk Officer from APHIS Wildlife Services checked into the Joint Field Office on 21AUG15. The ESF11 Coordinator transitioned to duty station on 23AUG15 and continued to support the operations until the Desk Officer demobilized on 29AUG15. At the time of ESF11's departure, only the local hospital had direct electrical power. All other facilities (public offices, grocery stores, hotels, small businesses, residences, etc.) were operating with emergency generator support.

Agricultural and Natural Resources support activities from the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture were initiated, coordinated, managed, and completed during the ESF11 activation. Key contributions included animal emergency response components (tracking donated pet crates, procuring and transporting generators for wildlife facilities, and damage survey assessment of the Saipan Zoo resulting in eligibility for emergency protection measure assistance), debris management (vegetative debris site locations coordinated with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service), emergency feeding (through the USDA Food and Nutrition Service's Disaster Nutrition Assistance Program (D-NAP), and coordination of logistics to include arranging lodging requirements off-island. Additional notable accomplishments are listed below.

SIGNIFICANT ACTIONS/ACTIVITIES

- (1) ESF11 was requested by APHIS Animal Care to assist with a damage survey assessment of the Saipan Zoo reporting significant damage to the facility enclosures and perimeter security fence. ESF11 met with facility owner and photo documented the damages throughout. As a result, ESF11 worked with the Federal Coordinating Official to explore eligibility of support for emergency protective measure assistance. The zoo was determined eligible due to an existing Memorandum of Understanding with Public Works.
- (2) ESF11 coordinated the logistical requirement of APHIS Wildlife Services generator (work in Guam) requested by the Department of Natural Lands and Resources/DOI (US Fish and Wildlife Service) office to maintain operations.
- (3) ESF11 secured a generator for Interior's Territorial Archivist and the records library building that needed air conditioning to prevent mold damage to archived documents.
- (4) ESF11 supported Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service with daily situational information to assist with the implementation of their Disaster Nutrition Assistance Program.
- (5) ESF11 provided USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service vegetative debris site locations to FEMA and coordinated with USDA, FEMA and Territorial representatives to identify options and alternatives for approximately 200,000 cubic yards of vegetative debris.
- (6) ESF11 supported Farm Service Agency field personnel with daily updates of response activities of generator installation, debris removal, and water system services to support their field assessment activities.

LESSONS LEARNED

Successful:

- (1) Immediate support from APHIS programs including Investigative Enforcement Service, Animal Care, Plant Protection and Quarantine, Veterinary Services, and Wildlife Services to assist at the FEMA Coordination Centers and provide updates of personnel and facilities on-island. In addition, USDA programs including Food and Nutrition Service, Food Safety Inspection Service, and Interior Programs and all USDA partners on the State Emergency Board contributed to providing situational awareness and distributing information to/from their staff and partners.
- (2) Telecom support for International activation and connectivity was outstanding.
- (3) Initial deployment approvals seamless and immediate.
- (4) Inter-agency and Department coordination and support provided the Joint Field Office with a complete picture of all ESF11 Agriculture and Natural Resources activities by all Agriculture and Interior Agencies, Services, and Bureaus.

Challenges/Areas for Improvement:

- (1) Schedule regular refresher of the ESF11 West resource request process, including use of the Resource Request Workbook and ESF11 West Activation checklist outlining communication with APHIS program contacts, regional emergency program manager, national coordinator, mission assignment manager, and dispatch.
- (2) IT Administrative rights should be approved for all ESF11 personnel.
- (3) IT updates (laptop and telecom) should be verified prior to deployment.
- (4) Logistical support (lodging, rental cars, etc.) should be conducted by the response agency (ESF11 personnel) to reduce potential failures in long-term planning and continuity.