



NATIONAL NEWS

DMORT **Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team**

SPRING 2006

EDITORS: SHEILA HALL AND TERRY SWANSON



2006 NDMS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The following article originally appeared in the May 2006 edition of "Voice of V."

The NDMS National Conference was held in **Reno, Nevada on April 22-26, 2006.**

The following were **Conference Goals:** to deliver an understanding of the health and medical requirements generated by disasters of any origin; provide access to authorities responsible for managing these requirements; afford opportunities for the delivery of education and the exchange of ideas necessary to the development of

capabilities at the local, state, regional, national, and international levels.

Conference Objectives included: conveying the principles which underlie professional emergency health and medical service delivery; documenting the status of the profession as of 2006; encouraging participants to engage in continuing education, training, research, and information sharing, to enable further development of this Nation's lifesaving systems.

For those DMORT members who were unable to attend, the following is a brief recap of the DMORT portion of the program.

Pre-Conference Course:

Mass Fatalities Train the Trainer, Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team

Speakers:
Todd Ellis, DMORT Region VI Commander
David McBath, DMORT Region II
Chuck Smith, DMORT Region VI Deputy Commander
Cotton Howell, DMORT Region IV Commander
Jennie Thommen, DMORT FAC Commander

The panel of speakers at this two-day pre-conference course discussed a wide range of subjects, pertaining to a Mass Fatality Incident (MFI): components of NIMS

(National Incident Management System), benefits of ICS (Incident Command System), characteristics of a MFI, steps required to respond to a MFI, the roles and responsibilities of key personnel, incident morgue requirements, federal resources, and victim support plans. This course enabled participants to describe the operational process and tasks involved in conducting a response to a MFI; understand the stresses, reactions, and stress management techniques utilized in a MFI; and evaluate the readiness of their agency and jurisdiction to execute these operations.

Conference Courses:

General Session, Emergency Support Function #8 / National Disaster Medical System: Response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Speakers:
Arnie Bierenbaum,
Department of Veterans
Affairs
Carol Hall, American
Red Cross
CAPT Andrew Stevermer,
USPHS, ARNP
CDR Mick Core, USPHS
Representatives from the Department(s) of Defense, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Veterans Affairs, and the American Red Cross shared their individual agency perspectives and discussed interagency operations during two of the most historic

natural disasters in United States history - Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

DMORT Adapts to Intolerable Circumstances - Katrina: The First 72 Hours

Speaker:
Doug McKown, F-ABMDI,
DMORT Region IV

During the 2005 hurricane season, unprecedented death and destruction occurred in the Gulf Coast. Two major hurricanes and levee failures produced never before seen destruction and mass fatalities to two areas, which were only seventy miles apart. Doug McKown explained the various ways in which the responders were housed in the austere conditions in Mississippi during the initial stages of the deployment. He discussed the many ways in which team members came together as a functioning unit, in order to not only complete the mission, but also to survive in conditions that no one had anticipated. He defined and discussed the term "survivor mentality." Mr. McKown also demonstrated how local infrastructure might not be able to support responders during mass fatality incidents and possible ways to overcome this obstacle.

General Session, Pandemic Flu: Planning and Responding to a Worldwide Threat

Speakers:
Howard Backer, MD, MPH

Gary Osman, MD, MPH
Benjamin Schwartz, MD

This presentation described the pandemic influenza threat, highlighting the H5NI avian influenza situation. It explained the potential impacts of a pandemic threat, summarized critical response activities, and reviewed the planning and preparedness activities that will increase the effectiveness of a response at the local, state, and Federal levels.

Where It All Comes Together: Information Resources

Speakers:
Donald Bloom, DMORT FAC
Deputy Commander
David Hunt, DMORT Region
V Deputy Commander
Brad Targhetta, DMORT
Region V Deputy
Commander

The management of fatality-related data is critical to the successful outcome of a mass fatality operation. A shortage of qualified personnel for this job was apparent during the 2005 hurricane responses. This session utilized the Disaster Portable Morgue Unit (DPMU) Information Resources equipment to provide an active, hands-on exercise designed for those DMORT people who have a basic knowledge of computer data entry. After a period of instruction, attendees were presented with a mock set of ante and post mortem data and were tasked with entering that data into the VIP (Victim Identification Profile) program. The VIP program was updated to FileMaker 8 during the last deployment. There was a review of the

new sign-in, password features, time stamping, record locking, and an overview of the types of reports generated during deployment. The standard operating procedures for working with the VIP program in the Information Resources section were discussed. This exercise gave attendees a basic understanding of how to create new records and search for identifying characteristics.

From Ordinary to Extraordinary: DMORT Workers

Speaker:
Denise Bulling, MA, LPC

Work at a disaster is grueling, as all NDMS personnel know. There are long hours, shortages, inconveniences, and lack of sleep. DMORT members have selected themselves for a job that not many people can or are willing to do - work with human remains. Exposure to traumatic death is significantly related to later symptoms of intrusion and avoidance. In this presentation, Denise Bulling described what could be done about the emotional and psychological risks associated with this work. She also addressed the things that can be done before the workers leave the job and after they get home that will mitigate the stress effects. This session discussed the DMORT member, the unique stressors they encounter, and ways in which their organization, family, and friends can help reduce the stress response.

Hurricane Deployment Overview

Speaker:
*Chuck Smith, DMORT
Region VI Deputy
Commander*

This presentation encompassed the DMORT response to the largest natural disaster in United States history from a mortuary standpoint. Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast on August 27, 2005 and was responsible for over 1,100 deaths. On September 24, 2005, Hurricane Rita devastated Southwestern Louisiana and caused the disinterment of hundreds of previously buried human remains. The total disinterred from both storms exceeded 1,300 bodies.

Mr. Smith reviewed in detail the West Morgue Operations. The three components of the 2005 DMORT response were Forward Operations, FAC-FENCE, and Morgue Operations at both St. Gabriel and Carville. He expounded in greater detail the statistics of these missions. The difficulties of these missions were discussed, such as the lack of businesses, hotels, food, water, and amenities. Problems in New Orleans and the difficulties encountered with removing remains from the swamps and marshes were also explained. As of April 25, 2006, there are 66 bodies that are still unidentified.

An Update on Coordination of the Federal Mass Fatality Response

Speaker:
*Dale Downey, DMORT
WMD Commander
Ann Norwood, MD*

A work group of local, state, and Federal experts in mass fatalities participated in the revision of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Target Capability List (TCL) for Fatality Management. A Federal-level Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Emergency Support Function #8 subgroup was formed to examine mass fatality issues. Federal-level government and association stakeholders in fatality management are working together to improve Federal preparedness and response activities across all incidents, e.g. crime/terrorism (FBI), transportation accidents (NTSB), and natural disasters (HHS/DHS and the NDMS Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Teams). As work progresses, there will be greater involvement from state and local stakeholders. This presentation updated participants on the progress of this process.

DMORT Team Meeting



All ten DMORT regions, the DPMU team, the DMORT Family Assistance Core Team (FACT), and the WMD team were represented at a DMORT Team Meeting, during the NDMS Conference in Reno, Nevada. Changes in DMORT, training requirements, team funding, and team member responsibilities were among the topics discussed.

DPMU- The DPMU is now a **Stand Alone Team**. **Shannon Dotson** is the new DPMU Commander. The DPMU team will increase team membership to 25 by June 2006; there are currently 6 members.

FACT- The FACT Is now a **Stand Alone Team**. There are currently 25 team members. New leadership positions: Commander- **Jennie Thommen**
Deputy Commander- **Don Bloom**
Administrative Officer- **Arbie Going**
Training Office- **Warren Tewes**

WMD - The WMD team is a **Stand Alone Team**.

Note: The “Stand Alone Teams” are still part of DMORT

Search and Recovery Teams - There will be a 25-person Search and Recovery Team on each regional team. They will have specialized training and equipment.

Region I - New Administrative Officer: **Robert Plante**

Region IX- New Training Officer: TBA

Cotton Howell (Region IV Commander) addressed team members on the issue of “self deployment.” The proper channels for deployment must be followed following a mass fatality incident. This involves keeping in touch with your Administrative Officer and Team Commander regarding your dates of availability. Self-deployment will **not** be tolerated.

Buddy Bell (Program Manager for DMORT) answered DMORT related questions, including training requirements and team member responsibilities.

Jack Beall (Chief, NDMS Section) discussed DMORT team funding and distribution.

2006 NDMS ANNUAL CONFERENCE AWARDS
Reno, Nevada

“On behalf of the partners of the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS), the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Defense, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Veterans Affairs, I wish to extend our sincere appreciation to all of you for your outstanding dedication and hard work during the extraordinary events that have taken place during the last year. Through you, we are able to fulfill our mission to serve our Nation’s citizens in times of extraordinary need. I look forward to our continued partnership as we face whatever challenges lie ahead.”

Jack W. Beall
Chief

National Disaster Medical System Section



CONGRATULATIONS

The **2006 NDMS Conference Awards Ceremony** was held in Reno on April 23, 2006. The following DMORT members were honored with the **NDMS Response Team Distinguished Member of the Year Award:**

- DMORT I **James Mockler**
- DMORT II **John “Cliff” Oldfield**
- DMORT III **John M. Carson, D.D.S.**
- DMORT IV **Bobby Wyatt**
- DMORT V **David Hunt**
- DMORT VI **David Hawthorne**
- DMORT VII **James M. Fullerton**
- DMORT VIII **Jeffrey Andrew Zealley**
- DMORT IX **James J. Cullen**
- DMORT X **Frank Sabestian**
- DMORT WMD **Douglas Nobles**
- DMORT DPMU **Michael Gedert**
- DMORT FAC **Warren Tewes**

DMORT Regions were also recognized at the awards ceremony for their participation in these events:

TOPOFF III, April 2005
DMORT II, IV, WMD

Hurricane Katrina, August 2005 DMORT I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, DPMU, WMD, FAC

Congratulations to all of the recipients and anyone else who was recognized at this event!

2007 NDMS ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Nashville, Tennessee
March 17-21, 2007

Scott Schmidt (Region II Training Officer) will be the new DMORT Program Director for the Annual NDMS Conferences. He succeeds **Duane Bigoni** (Region X Commander) who had held this position for several years.

VIP UPDATES
DON BLOOM
Deputy Commander Family Assistance Core Team

There has been much written and debated about the VIP program and its performance during the past deployment. Much of the discussion has been based on what the VIP program is perceived to do. I am writing this article in hopes of clarifying any misconceptions regarding VIP – the program’s current functions, as well as the future direction of its development.

The most positive aspect in all of the debate is the realization that the collection of victim ante mortem data is paramount in the positive identification process. In the absence of ante mortem medical records, much of the information used to make positive identifications during Katrina were made from the provided VIP information. As with every deployment, we learn from our experiences, and Hurricane Katrina was no different.

VIP VERSION 8

At the beginning of the Katrina deployment, we deployed *Filmmaker Pro 8* (VIP was derived from this database). This was an entirely new product with many new features, previously unavailable for our use. Due to requests from the State of Louisiana, it became apparent that we would need to move to *FMP 8* – this could provide them with the data that they were requesting. Re-writing the VIP program, while learning all of the new features, is something I would not like to repeat during a deployment. Future changes and updates need to be planned for and implemented in a non-deployment setting.

That being said, I had some excellent support people from the State, and the transition went better than expected. *VIP Version 8* is a much more robust product that can better meet the needs of a DMORT deployment. The relational table structure will allow for unlimited field choices, along with faster searches and finds. With the help of several of our DMORT dentists, we were able to add work lists to the ANTE MORTEM dental section, thus allowing the DMORT dental team to accomplish their goals faster and with less duplication.

DNA is going to play a major role in all future disasters, and we are building an entire section to support them.

SOME OF THE KEY FEATURES OF VIP-8

- 1) VIP information can now be easily viewed in Adobe PDF files with the new PDF Maker
- 2) Excel files of all VIP data with one click for data analysts in-house or for export to various agencies
- 3) Performs e-mail merge to send data on the fly
- 4) Controls access with greatly expanded access privileges
- 5) Deploys VIP to multiple sites with web publish of the 8 page Interview Form
- 6) Manages VIP information by giving instant access to all details, exploiting the Fast Match feature that lets users quickly search data without the time-consuming burden of typing
- 7) Easy integration of all Digital media,

enabling Investigators to look at all AM/PM (ante mortem/post mortem) records including Digital media

- 8) Faster comparisons of Clothing and Jewelry inventory between the AM/PM screens

FEATURES ADDED AS A RESULT OF OUR DEPLOYMENT

- 1) Next of Kin lists tied to victim
- 2) DNA work lists for tracking DNA workflow
- 3) Dental work lists to enable AM Dental Teams to acquire records, track workflow, and better integrate with the PM dental team
- 4) Expanded search and find criteria
- 5) Call logs added to record multiple contacts with families
- 6) Release work lists to allow those working in release to better track workflow, keep updated with

family contacts, and communicate with the morgue operations

- 7) Expanded use of a relational design, thus eliminating limitations in types of data collected

One of the concerns expressed was in regards to data protection. I have included information regarding how password management and record audits are handled.

Authentication

The password management in VIP is flexible and relatively easy to use. It is familiar to users and will give them a sense of individual accountability, since they cannot be wrongly blamed for actions taken by the use of a password that “everybody” knows. All users now have their own user name and password. The IR Manager will appreciate that actions of the application can be tied to specific individuals. Such accountability will allow administrators to identify which users need additional training. If an attack does happen, the individual account identification may provide clues for an investigation.

Auditing

The VIP database and the Web Publishing feature of VIP both produce audit trails that are stored as ASCII text files. As required by most organizations, all valid and

invalid password attempts are audited. This allows an organization to detect password-guessing attacks. Audit trail information can also be used for non-attack problems. The information can help locate mistakes made by authorized users and identify users who should receive additional training

The security features in the VIP program are intended to meet the security requirements that support a DMORT mission: authentication, access control, auditing, file security, and communication security. The security features in VIP are more comprehensive and yet generally easy to understand, setup, and maintain.

Summary

Every deployment has presented DMORT with job duties and responsibilities that are sometimes out of our scope. The DMORT “we can do that” attitude encourages us to “roll up our sleeves” and help as needed. VIP has been asked to perform in ways that it was not designed to do. Again, we do what it takes to accommodate any need. For a specific deployment, this is sometimes perceived as product inadequacy. This was the case in Louisiana, when VIP was used to track missing persons. Since we were not aware of any other options, we did what we could with what was available to us at the time.

Currently, there are several agencies that are attempting to write a program, which can either replace or compete with the VIP Program. HHS

has currently hired a company that has sub-contracted this process to a second vendor at a substantial cost: the specifications for the work, along with the actual work, are being done without any input from anyone in DMORT. Every deployment presents specific needs that could never be completely anticipated; however, I believe that the people of the DMORT system have the experience and should drive any future development.

The VIP program and the Filemaker platform have consistently provided data, resulting in consistent success rates of 85-95% identifications (including Louisiana). All of this was developed at no cost to the Federal Government. We have recently received a commitment from NDMS to appropriately fund further development of the VIP Program. This will be done within the DMORT system, with input from all Forensic disciplines. I assure you that VIP will be ready for the next event.

REGIONAL TRAINING

DMORT REGIONS I AND II TRAINING **ALBANY, NEW YORK** **March 17-19, 2006**

Regions I and II held a joint training session at the Holiday Inn Turf in Albany, New York on March 17-19, 2006. Over 150 attendees, including VMAT and DMAT team members, participated in the meeting.

The training commenced on Friday evening with

registration and a welcome reception. Team members renewed old friendships and made new acquaintances, while sharing deployment experiences during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Buddy Bell (DMORT Program Manager) was present to officially appoint **Kevin Costigan** as Region II Commander, following the untimely death of **John “Cliff” Oldfield** in December 2005. Mr. Bell updated the team on the future of DMORT in relation to the NDMS system.

The training was comprised of a wide range of lectures. Incident Action Planning (IAP), Incident Command System (ICS), and National Incident Management System (NIMS) were thoroughly explained. **James Montgomery** and **Paul Conrad** (FEMA representatives) discussed a series of topics mandated by FEMA. Mr. Montgomery spoke about Equal Employment Opportunity, aspects of discrimination, and sexual harassment. Paul Conrad presented a lecture on Ethics, distinguishing between appropriate and inappropriate behavior as a FEMA employee. **Tom Watson** and **Christine Johnson** (VA-1 DMAT Strike Team members) described their experiences while deployed with DMORT in Gulfport, Mississippi. **Dianne Whittaker** (VMAT-1 Member) delivered an introductory presentation on VMAT, explaining the team’s mission, purpose, and operation.

Federal Occupational Health providers were present at the training to provide medical immunization updates and administer necessary immunizations. **Captain Bonnie Pyler** (Emergency Coordinator FEMA Region 2) introduced herself to the teams and distributed new DMORT uniforms.

Overall, the training was informative, productive, and an effective opportunity for the diverse divisions of FEMA/NDMS to interact in a non-deployment setting. The teams were overwhelmingly satisfied with the meeting site and its provisions. **Scott Schmidt** (Region II Training Officer) anticipates future joint training sessions.

DMORT REGION III
ANNUAL TRAINING
GETTYSBURG,
PENNSYLVANIA
March 24-26, 2006

DMORT Region III conducted their annual training session with PA-2 DMAT in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania on March 24-26.

The PA-2 DMAT (NDMS Specialty Crush Injury Team) and their Commander – **Rod Shabbick** – joined DMORT III in this training session which featured 16-hours of intensive and comprehensive Incident Command (ICS) training. The ICS training was instructed by **Daryl Sensenig, CEM** (Certified Emergency Manager). Daryl is the Training Officer for the DMORT-WMD Team, a retired Battalion Chief, and instructor of ICS at FEMA's Emergency Management

Institute training centers in Emmitsburg, Maryland and Anniston, Alabama. Basic concepts of ICS were presented to the entire team on the first day, including review of Command and General Staff Positions, implementation of an Incident Action Plan (IAP), concepts of Unified Command, and special DMORT applications of ICS. ICS forms and documents were also thoroughly reviewed.

On the following day, every team member participated in a scenario-based exercise, where they were assigned specific functions and participated in the development of an Incident Action Plan. Everyone worked together while reviewing how to carry out the assigned responsibilities.

Guest speakers were also present at the training and delivered a variety of informative presentations. **Paul Sledzik** of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and former Commander of DMORT Region III gave an overview of the NTSB mission. He also explained how NDMS and the NTSB collaborate following a mass fatality transportation accident.

Judy Shabbick, R.N. of PA-2 DMAT offered an engaging and timely presentation on self-care during a deployment in austere conditions.

FEMA representative - **Mr. James Montgomery** - led a lively and extended discussion on discrimination and sexual harassment.

John Nase, D.D.S. presented a comprehensive overview of the Victim Identification Program (VIP) and its application at the Family Assistance Center (FAC) during Hurricane Katrina.

Patrick Murray, D.D.S. – DMORT III Training Officer – conducted a special half-day orientation program, exclusively for new DMORT members.

DMORT REGION III AND
PA-2 DMAT JOINT
TRAINING
HOMER CITY,
PENNSYLVANIA
June 23-25, 2006

On June 23-25, DMORT Region III and PA-2 DMAT (NDMS Specialty Crush Injury Team) held a joint training at Homer City, Pennsylvania. DMORT-WMD was also invited to participate. The training site was in a coal mine, deep underground in Pennsylvania. The scenario was an underground explosion at the coal mine with multiple living and deceased victims.

This realistic exercise exposed participants to the sights, smells, and sounds of being in a coal mine. "Confined space" training was provided before the mine exercise to acclimate everyone taking part in the exercise. (Temperatures were in the 50s, so appropriate gear and outerwear were donned prior to transport into the mine.)

The PA-2 DMAT, led by Commander **Rod Shabbick**, performed extrication and treatment of entrapped

“patients,” who had sustained multiple crush injuries. Simultaneously, the DMORT-WMD Team reviewed underground search and recovery techniques in collaboration with DMORT III, whose members prepared “human remains” for the identification process, following transport to morgue operations at the mine’s surface.

DMORT REGION III AND PA-3 DMAT FIELD TRAINING EXERCISE EDINBORO UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA July 20-24, 2006

DMORT Region III participated with PA-3 DMAT in a field exercise on July 20-24 at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania near Erie, Pennsylvania. The title of the drill was “Quake on the Lake” and featured a simulated earthquake (7.2 Richter Scale) on Lake Erie. This realistic simulation also included victims, both living (100,000 injured) and deceased (10,000).

This was an unprecedented exercise, comprising eight DMAT teams, two VMAT teams, DMORT III, and one NPRT (National Pharmacy Response Team) combining their expertise at a single field exercise.

The DMAT team focused on treating multiple living “victims” who overwhelmed hospital capacity. DMORT III conducted morgue operations and demonstrated the victim identification process for dead “victims.” The VMAT’s had several dogs present and tended to

animal “victims,” both domestic and livestock. Classroom sessions were offered in multiple disciplines: morgue operations (DMORT III), animal care (VMAT), puncture wounds and inhalation injuries (DMAT), Media Relations, and other disaster-related subjects.

Noteworthy individuals also attending the training were host **Russell Bieniek, M.D.** (Commander of PA-3 DMAT) and Emergency Coordinators FEMA Region 3 – **Dr. Steve Formanski** and **Jim Zink**.

DMORT REGION III TEAM PREPAREDNESS AND ACTIVATION TRAINING UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA July 29, 2006

DMORT Region III conducted a “Team Preparedness and Activation Training” on July 29 at the University of the District of Columbia in Washington, D.C. Team preparedness, alerting, and activation procedures were thoroughly reviewed and discussed.

All team officers gave midyear team updates: **John McGuire** (Deputy Commander), **Richard Rapp** (Administrative Officer), and **Patrick Murray, D.D.S.** (Training Officer).

Warren Tewes, D.D.S. – Training Officer for the DMORT-FACT (Family Assistance Center Team) - provided updates on the FACT, including its current

status as a “stand alone team,” the team’s mission, and on-going activities. Dr. Tewes also informed the team about the Flight 93 Memorial, which will be dedicated in Shanksville, Pennsylvania – site of the crash in Western Pennsylvania as the fifth anniversary of September 11, 2001 approaches. DMORT III was activated for the Flight 93 incident, and this memorial holds special significance for team members.

Daryl Sensenig, CEM – Training Officer for the DMORT-WMD Team – discussed the mission of WMD, its current “stand alone team” status, and functions. He also addressed DMORT III’s future Search and Recovery capability, which is being developed in collaboration with **John Carson, D.D.S.** of DMORT III.

Jack Ingle – Medicolegal Investigator – presented his vision for the Team Newsletter, an enduring and effective communication device, which changes and grows with the team and continues to be published by popular acclaim.

Paul Sledzik – National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and former DMORT III Commander - explained how the NTSB, NDMS, and DMORT III would work together following a transportation incident in Region III.

Medicolegal Investigator, **Don Cather**, shared his reflections and memories - some humorous and some

sobering - about his deployment during the Hurricane Katrina mission.

Patricia Kauffman, M.D. – DMORT Region III Commander – briefed team members on issues discussed at the NDMS Commanders’ Meeting, which concluded earlier in the day.

REGIONS IV AND VI
ANNUAL TRAINING
LOUISVILLE,
KENTUCKY
July 20-24, 2006

DMORT Regions IV and VI held their annual combined training on July 20 -24 in Louisville, Kentucky. The overall theme of the training was Lessons Learned from Hurricane Katrina.

The training began with the “presentation of colors” by the Louisville Police Honor Guard. **Doug Hamilton** (Louisville-Jefferson County Emergency Management Director) welcomed the team and made opening comments. **Jerry E. Abramson** (Mayor of Louisville) proclaimed July 21, 2006 as Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team Day in Louisville.

The meeting commenced with a presentation by the State of Kentucky. The Kentucky Medical Examiner System and their mass fatality plans were very impressive. The partnership between the Emergency Management System, the County Coroners, and the Medical Examiner System could be a blueprint for the development of a statewide mass fatality system.

County Coroner - **Terry Dabney** (DMORT–WMD), Anthropologist - **Barbara Weekly- Jones** (DMORT IV), and State Anthropologist and renowned author (*Teasing Secrets of the Dead*) - **Dr. Emily Craig** (former DMORT IV member) are to be commended for their presentations on the Kentucky Emergency Response System.

Presentations on DMORT East and DMORT West provided everyone with insight into the extreme differences between the two operations. Other numerous topics were also discussed at this training, from the new “stand alone” DPMU Team, EEOC Training (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission), DMORT Field Operations Guide, Administrative Officer Guidance for members, to many other interesting and valuable sessions.

The DMORT IV members from Kentucky formed a committee that went “overboard” on hospitality. On Saturday evening, they chartered the *Belle of Louisville*. The *Belle* is the last of the original steam stern-wheeled riverboats still in operation. With a little imagination, you could see the freight on the deck and the gamblers around the tables in the cabin of this historical transportation vessel. The three-hour cruise up the Ohio River was the perfect social atmosphere to complete a very productive educational weekend.

A note of thanks to **Buddy Bell** and his band of merry

men, and one woman, for the fantastic job they did in fingerprinting and taking ID photos for the 250-plus DMORT members who attended.

The overall opinion of the training by participants was positive, and everyone left with a renewed spirit and dedication to the DMORT mission.

DMORT REGION V
ANNUAL TRAINING
ARGONNE NATIONAL
LABORATORY
ARGONNE, ILLINOIS
June 2-4, 2006

Over ninety team members and guests attended the Region V Annual Training Session at Argonne National Laboratory in Argonne, Illinois on June 2-4, 2006. The consensus by the majority of the participants was that the lecture facility, lodging, accommodations, and food were all excellent. The following were key agencies at this training: DMORT V, DMORT VI, Emergency Coordinators FEMA Regions 5 and 6, DMORT-WMD, DMORT-DPMU, FAC Team, NDMS, FEMA, and Metropolitan Police of the United Kingdom. These groups provided a comprehensive and informative training for the team.

Opening Remarks

Region V Command Staff

Brad Targhetta (Region V Deputy Commander) reviewed the recent changes in DMORT Staff. Because

the DPMU, FAC, and WMD specialty teams are now all “stand alone teams,” members of DMORT Region V can no longer maintain dual membership.

Appreciation plaques were presented to **Mike Gedert** and **Bob “Bubba” Stevens** for their roles in creating the Region V Team and for their contributions to DMORT itself.

Hurricane Deployments

Chuck Smith, Region VI Deputy Commander
Amy Taylor, Emergency Coordinator FEMA Region 6

Amy Taylor defined the Emergency Coordinator’s Role, and how they can help DMORT in a deployment. She emphasized the importance of knowing your region’s Emergency Coordinators. She introduced Emergency Coordinators FEMA Region 5: **Carl Adrianopoli** and **Janet Odom**.

Amy described how Incident Action Planning (IAP) is utilized. IAP is part of the Incident Command System (ICS) – a document to guide planning in order to meet the objectives of a mission.

Since the hurricanes in 2005, a TF (Task Force) has been created to support the DMORT mission at the JFO (Joint Field Operations), Ops Section Chief, and FCO (Field Coordinating Officer) level. Members of the TF include: ESF-3 NSA CE, ESF-4 Forest Service, ESF-8 HHS, ESF-13 Security, ESF-15 Public Affairs,

Congressional Affairs, DOD (Department of Defense), and DOT (Department of Transportation). The utilized IAP will need to define the objectives of the mission. The TF must be flexible in order to support the mission. The TF will consist of a well-trained group of people who can maintain critical roles during the mission. Operational control must remain with subject matter experts.

Chuck Smith discussed the DMORT East and West Katrina Operations. These were two different operations with unparalleled circumstances. Chuck gave an operational overview of the West Katrina Operation. He included timelines and problems with the State, due to the State’s lack of a disaster plan.

The following were some of the statistics from the operation: 910 storm victims were processed; 85% of the victims were identified without DNA; 612 caskets were processed; 612 disinterred remains were recasketed and returned to the parishes; 66 victims remain unidentified; 13,000 Victim Identification Profiles (VIP) were completed.

Administrative Issues

Sue Atwood, Region V Administrative Officer

Sue reviewed a number of DMORT policies and procedures; including National Travel, lodging, rental cars, per diems, phone cards, and vouchering for reimbursement. She also distributed an extremely

helpful packet of information to assist team members before, during, and after a deployment.

Sue stressed that team members need to make sure she has **ALL** of their current information on file, such as e-mail addresses, home addresses, phone numbers, licensure, direct deposit forms, and other information that could influence deployability.

Sue introduced **Dr. Jim Adams**, who will be taking over Bob “Bubba” Stevens’ duties as our local proprietor of DMART. She reminded everyone to be courteous to him, as he is doing a favor for all of us by accepting these duties.

DMORT-WMD

Steve Tinder, DMORT-WMD Deputy Commander

DMORT-WMD (Weapons of Mass Destruction) recently became a “stand alone team” within the FEMA/NDMS system and is managed under a different response program.

The mission of DMORT-WMD was defined: this team decontaminates human remains to make them safe from a chemical, biological, or radiological incident. DMORT-WMD will certify to the best of their ability that remains are clean before sending them to a morgue in a clean “reefer,” for ultimate return to the families.

DMORT-WMD assists the local agency with educating the Medical Examiner/Coroner, workers, mortuary staff and other

involved people if requested to do so.

Steve presented an overview of their operations:

- Red Zone – Remains are brought from the incident site. Body numbers are assigned, personal effects and clothing are removed, and photographs are taken.
- Yellow Zone - Remains undergo a full body examination, including notating significant features. Gross decontamination takes place by thorough scrubbing with an appropriate cleaner. A solution of Sodium Hypochlorite and Soapy Water are the best cleaning agents.
- Part Yellow and Part Green Zone – Chemical Agent Monitor (CAM) is used to determine if the Yellow Zone performed their job completely. The body is returned to the Yellow Zone if the CAM detects any remaining contaminants.
- Green Zone – Remains are placed in a clean “reefer.”

DMORT-WMD conducts significant research at the Forensic Anthropology Center at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. They are currently researching the “Verichip” System – a method of numbering

remains via an inserted scanning chip.

Field Recovery

Dave Hunt, Region V Deputy Commander

Shawn Wilson, Region V Member

Dave Hunt and Shawn Wilson gave a comprehensive presentation regarding their personal experiences on the Strike Teams, while on deployment in Louisiana following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The challenges, team structure, logistics, operations, communications, and the overall working conditions were reviewed. Missions that were ventured by the strike teams included: the Superdome, Cameron Parish, and St. Bernard Parish.

Family Assistance Core Team (FACT)

Todd Grisier, FAC Member

FACT is now a “stand alone team.” The team’s mission is to aid in body identification, through accurate ante mortem information received and to support and aid the Incident Commander.

There will be future changes within FACT. As a new core team, no funds have been allocated for team training expenses. Family Assistance leadership is examining the designation of five individuals from each DMORT region to be cross-trained in FACT; however, these members will retain

their status on their regional team.

Following Hurricane Katrina, Todd described how the mission in Baton Rouge changed from body identification to body identification and locating displaced persons. The government decided to rename the FAC in Baton Rouge to the “Find Family National Call Center.” Early on, an overload of calls to the “866” Hotline put a strain on the nine-member FAC team. Soon, volunteers from the State Funeral Directors Association, National Funeral Directors Association, Kenyon International, and Westoff assisted the FACT on callbacks, so that serious work and input of information could be efficiently accomplished. Operations in Baton Rouge have now been turned over to a private entity and will cease by August 14, 2006.

Todd explained that the FACT was in charge of the entire center. They operated with a fully functional Information Resource (IR) that communicated with the IR at the morgue. He also mentioned the updates on VIP to Filemaker Pro 8.0: it is user friendly, requires very little training, and allows photographs and illustrations to be inserted or accessed easily. From this mission, a Family Assistance Procedure and Policy Manual was developed. This document is very comprehensive, incident-specific, and may be used as a prototype for future deployments.

DMORT-DPMU

Mike Gedert, DMORT-DPMU Member

Bob “Bubba” Stevens, DMORT-DPMU Member

The DPMU (Disaster Portable Morgue Unit) is now a “stand alone team.”

Shannon Dotson – the DPMU Commander – will be building the team to forty members, with representation from all ten regions.

Prospective members will need to go through their Regional Commanders before committing to this team. There will be a new Central DPMU by the end of the year.

The DPMU works under FEMA logistic protocols. There will be individual accountability for equipment issued at a deployment; including phones, cars, radios, and morgue section equipment. Purchases will also need to be justified and submitted through proper channels, not by individual members; therefore, understanding the NIMS (National Incident Management System) chain of command is crucial to all team members.

There is a new Equipment Request Process: the Morgue Operations Person submits an *Equipment Request* to their Section Leader; the Section Leader completes the *DPMU Supply Request Form* and submits it to the Morgue Operations Chief; the Morgue Operations Chief must sign and submit the request to the DPMU Log Chief – ALL issued equipment will require a

Hand Receipt. If equipment is damaged or missing, there are specific forms for reporting purposes, which need to be completed immediately. Members will be held financially responsible for equipment that has been signed-out but not returned.

Overall, the DMORT-DPMU is restructuring toward a better system. As always, their mission is to support DMORT during a mission.

CISM – Incident Stress Management

James Offrink, Region V Member

Incident Stress can be a silent enemy, having adverse effects on a unit’s mission and performances. The focus of Incident Stress Control is to maintain the readiness and optimal capabilities of the unit’s most valuable resource – its members. Incident Stress is a normal reaction to unusual or traumatic events.

Stress responses in normal situations differ from those associated with a deployment. Physical and mood changes can occur with altered levels of epinephrine, adrenaline, and norepinephrine. Long-term stresses can cumulatively result in permanent changes of neurons, the limbic system, and even DNA.

Jim described factors that can contribute to Incident Stress and the signs and symptoms of Incident Stress. He also distributed a handy guide with tips on post-deployment behavior for the team member and reunions with a

spouse, children, and co-workers.

He concluded the presentation with his personal experiences during his deployment in Mississippi at Hurricane Katrina East.

Minnesota Mass Fatality Drill

Mitchel Morey, M.D., Region V Member

The Hennepin County Medical Examiner’s Office in Minneapolis, Minnesota recently participated in a mock mass disaster drill. An interagency collaboration of state and local authorities contributed to this comprehensive exercise.

The drill was designed to be as realistic as possible, involving mass casualties, a FAC section, and utilization of the Minnesota DPMU. Temporary morgue setup with designated stations (Personal Effects, Anthropology, Dental, Radiology, etc.) and a demonstration of equipment contributed to the all-round training of all participants. After-Action Reports pertaining to this exercise will follow.

Other Region V members who helped in the organization of this drill were **Dr. Andrew Baker** and **Shawn Wilson**.

London Bombings

Detective Inspector Gary Locker, Metropolitan Police, United Kingdom

Gary Locker explained the United Kingdom's hierarchy of organization, while responding to a disaster. Identification Commission Structure and Identification Commission Issues are major components. Their equivalent to DMORT is the Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) Team, composed of the Casualty Bureau, Family Liaison, Victim Recovery, and Mortuary sections.

The details of the four separate bomb events on July 7, 2005 were described. Coroners from the cities of London, Westminster, and North London responded to this disaster, which resulted in 57 fatalities and 700 injuries. Bomb scene management system, explosive safety, environmental and structural safety, evidence collection, body recovery, central intelligence, morgue design, contamination control, and ways to assure continuity were reviewed in this session.

Sexual Harassment

James Montgomery, FEMA

Following the Hurricane Katrina deployment, FEMA received over thirty sexual harassment complaints. These complaints are taken very seriously by FEMA: this prompted the agency to conduct a mandatory sexual harassment presentation to all team members.

Mr. Montgomery discussed Equal Employment Opportunity, aspects of discrimination, and what constitutes sexual harassment. A sexual harassment video was shown,

and a quiz was given to the group about significant points from the lecture.

MST 101

Millard "Buddy" Bell, NDMS Program Manager

Mr. Bell addressed questions and concerns by members, regarding the potential future of DMORT in relation to the NDMS system. Codes of conduct when on deployment, including dress code, were also mentioned.

FEMA Region V

Carl Adrianopoli, Emergency Coordinator FEMA Region 5

Mr. Adrianopoli reviewed the lessons learned from a recent After Action Report for a Local, State, and Federal Response:

- States and local areas with the most highly organized and realistic plans receive a quicker and more effective response from FEMA.
- Communication failures will derail the best plans; equipment and networks must be tested, exercised, and revised of redundant systems.
- When political leadership (at any level) is not skilled in emergency management, it retreats to enforcing all rules, for that is all that it knows and controls – this creates "bottlenecks" everywhere.

- FEMA must pre-position water, ice, MRE's (Meals-Ready-to-Eat), and medical assets when disasters are imminent.
- Pre-positioned assets require available and suitable transportation and security.
- A lack of security can derail the best plans.
- State and local emergency management plans are basic to successful responses
- FEMA quotes: "Plans are nothing, planning is everything."

DMORT REGION VII TRAINING **LAKE OF THE OZARKS, MISSOURI** **July 7-9, 2006**



DMORT Region VII held its annual training at Port Arrowhead Resort at the Lake of the Ozarks, in Missouri on July 7-9, 2006.

Fingerprint experts were present and new FEMA badges were processed. Those who did not attend will receive further instruction by mail and e-mail, regarding how to complete this necessary procedure. Members must complete fingerprinting and badging before they can be eligible for deployment.

The training program consisted of 16 hours of classroom lectures. Seventy

percent of the team was in attendance, along with numerous guests and DMORT Region VII applicants. DMORT Region VII Command Staff, team members, and guest lecturers provided valuable information on the following topics: the Hurricane Katrina/Rita deployment, DMORT forms and paperwork, the definition and application of NIMS (National Incident Management System) and ICS (Incident Command System), packing for a deployment, DPMU updates, the scope of the new Search and Recovery Teams, Critical Stress debriefing, sexual harassment training, the role of the JFO (Joint Field Operations), the new DMORT Region VII web site, the DMORT mission statement, MST-101 (Management Support Team), and the distribution and notification of the NDMS Code of Conduct.

Professional presentations were made by **Dr. John Frasco** (Region VII Administrative Officer), **Bill Young** (Region VII Commander), **Dr. John Filippi** (Region VII Training Officer), **Mike Henderson** (Region VII Deputy Commander), **Buddy Bell** (NDMS Program Manager), **Mike Phillips** (Region VII Acting Deputy Commander), **Mark Maupin** (DPMU), **Dave Boyer** (DNA Specialist), **Bob Monserrate** (Region VII Mental Health Specialist), **Jaime Richardson** (Region VII Mental Health Specialist), **James Montgomery** (FEMA), **Mary Phillips** (Region VII Member), **Joan**

Harding (Emergency Coordinator FEMA Region 7), and **Dana Hall** (Emergency Coordinator FEMA Region 7).

Questions and answers were numerous and a final exit survey was completed. Certificates of attendance were presented to all attendees.

The team and guests rekindled old friendships and made new ones during the off-hours.

REGIONS VIII AND IX TRAINING **SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH** **July 28-30, 2006**

Regions VIII and IX held their combined annual training in Salt Lake City, Utah on July 28-30, 2006.

The training provided a variety of informative topics and team discussion in the following presentations:

Search and Recovery Team Leader Class
Speakers: **Richard Lipich** (DMORT Region VIII Administrative Officer), **Mark Stratmoen** (DMORT Region VIII Medical Investigator), and **Rudi Riet** (DMORT Region VIII Medical Investigator)

Search and Recovery
Speakers: **Alan Siddoway** (DMORT Region VIII Deputy Commander), **Randy Emon** (DMORT Region IX Search and Recovery Specialist), **Ray Roe** (DMORT Region IX Acting Logistics Coordinator), and **Rodney Walters** (DMORT Region IX Search and Recovery Specialist)

Critical Incident Stress Management

Speakers: **James Ferro** (DMORT Region VIII Psychologist) and **G. Michael Avarett** (DMORT Region VIII Mental Health Specialist)

Morgue Management

Speaker: **James Kramer** (DMORT Region VIII Medical Investigator)

Ethics and Equal Opportunity Employment

Speakers: **James Montgomery** (FEMA) and **Paul Conrad** (FEMA)

Morgue and Recovery - Logistics and Planning

Speakers: **Mike Gedert** (DPMU), **Jeff Zealley** (DPMU), and **Chuck Bowman** (DMORT Region VIII Deputy Commander)

Trailer Management

Speakers: **Kyle Zimmerman** (DMORT Region VIII Mortuary Officer), **Scott Anthony** (DMORT Region VIII Mortuary Officer), and **Todd Sturdevant** (DMORT Region IX)

DMORT - WMD

Speaker: **Lee Sweat** (DMORT WMD Deputy Commander)

Post Mortem Fingerprints

Speaker: **Peter Williams** (DMORT Region IX Fingerprint Specialist)

Peer Counseling

Speaker: **Julie Stringer** (DMORT Region VIII Deputy Commander)

Information Resources

Speaker: **Don Bloom** (DMORT Family Assistance)

Core Team Deputy
Commander).

Immunization updates and
fingerprinting were also
provided at this valuable
team training.

**DMORT REGION X AND
FAMILY ASSISTANCE
CORE TEAM (FACT)
TRAINING
BOTHHELL,
WASHINGTON
June 3-6, 2006**

DMORT Region X and the
Family Assistance Core Team
conducted a combined team
training on June 3-6, 2006 in
the Seattle, Washington area.

Jennie Thommen (FACT
Commander) delivered an
informative presentation on her
new “stand alone team.”
Region X Leadership explained
the purpose and criteria for
developing their regional
Search and Recovery Team.

Dean Strommer and **Jeanne
McLaughlin** managed an
interesting discussion on field
recovery operations. Other
presentations included a basic
deployment seminar, sexual
harassment, ethnic sensitivity,
and dental identification.

One of the highlights of the
session was a comprehensive
mapping exercise that brought
the entire team out into
Seattle’s traffic.

**CURRENT DMORT
LEADERSHIP**
Updated August 2006

DMORT I Officers

Commander ---
Michael O’Neil

Deputy Commander ---
Joseph Allen
Deputy Commander ---
Dwight Camp
Administrative Officer ---
Bryon Kelly
Administrative Officer ---
Robert (Zeke) Plante
Training Officer ---
Patricia Soucie

DMORT II Officers

Commander ---
Kevin T. Costigan
Deputy Commander ---
Susan Rivera
Administrative Officer ---
Kathy Costigan
Training Officer ---
Scott Schmidt

DMORT III Officers

Commander ---
Patricia Kauffman, MD
Deputy Commander ---
John McGuire
Administrative Officer ---
Richard Rapp
Training Officer ---
Patrick Murray, DDS

DMORT IV Officers

Commander ---
Cotton Howell
Deputy Commander ---
Paul Taylor
Administrative Officer ---
Kim Plunk
Training Officer ---
Gail Works

DMORT V Officers

Commander ---
Dr. Frank Saul
Deputy Commander ---
Brad Targhetta
Deputy Commander ---
David Hunt
Administrative Officer ---
Sue Atwood
Training Officer ---
Jan Simons

DMORT VI Officers

Commander ---
Todd Ellis
Deputy Commander ---
Terry Edwards
Deputy Commander ---
Chuck Smith
Deputy Commander ---
Don Carter
Administrative Officer ---
Cindy Mathews
Assistant Administrative
Officer ---
Jamie Hawthorne
Training Officer ---
Vickie Atchley

DMORT VII Officers

Commander ---
William H. (Bill) Young
Deputy Commander ---
Michael L. Henderson
Deputy Commander (Acting)
Michael L. Phillips
Administrative Officer ---
John Frasco, DDS
Training Officer ---
John E. Filippi, DDS

DMORT VIII Officers

Commander ---
Lance Peterson
Deputy Commander ---
Alan Siddoway
Deputy Commander ---
Julie Stringer
Deputy Commander ---
Chuck Bowman
Administrative Officer ---
Rich Lipich
Administrative Officer ---
L.J. Kendrick
Administrative Officer ---
Gary Refsland
Training Officer ---
Jeff Zeally

DMORT IX Officers

Commander ---
John Linstrom
Deputy Commander ---
Tony Manoukian
Deputy Commander ---
Robert Vigil
Deputy Commander (Acting)
Robert "Rocky" Shaw
Administrative Officer ---
Barbara Salazar
Deputy Administrative
Officer (Acting) ---
Mindy Latta-Roberts
SAR Specialist (Acting) --
Bruce Anderson
SAR Specialist (Acting) --
Randy Emon
SAR Specialist (Acting) --
Laura Fulginiti
SAR Specialist (Acting) --
Rodney Walters

DMORT X Officers

Commander ---
Duane Bigoni
Deputy Commander ---
Stephanie Swyter, DDS
Deputy Commander ---
Frank Sebastian
Administrative Officer -
Penny Englert
Assistant Administrative
Officer ---
Tracy Stockton-Walsh

DPMU Officers

Commander ---
Shannon Dotson

FAMILY ASSISTANCE CORE TEAM Officers

Commander (Acting) ---
Jennie Thommen
Deputy Commander ---
Don Bloom
Administrative Officer ---
Arbie Goings
Training Officer ---
John Turner

WMD TEAM Officers

Commander ---
Dale Downey
Deputy Commander
(Administration) ---
Steve Tinder
Deputy Commander
(Operations) ---
Leonard Parker
Deputy Commander
(Recovery) ---
Lee Sweat
Administrative Officer ---
Melissa Moeckel, DDS
Assistant Administrative
Officer ---
Andrea Couch
Assistant Administrative
Officer ---
Tami Schroder
Training Officer ---
Daryl Sensenig
Medical Director ---
Dr. Joe White
Logistics Chief ---
Doug (Digger) Nobles

CONDOLENCES



DMORT grieves the loss of a valuable team member: **Gabe Hensley** of Moores Hill, Indiana (Region V) passed away on July 24, 2006, while piloting his single-engine *Cessna 172* aircraft. Preliminary reports indicated engine problems, which resulted in the fatal crash.

Gabe joined DMORT on September 5, 2002. He was deployed with fellow

DMORT members in Gulfport, Mississippi and St. Gabriel, Louisiana, following the devastation from Hurricane Katrina (2005). For several weeks during his deployment, Gabe worked proficiently in various capacities at the morgue, in transportation, as well as with the Strike Teams. Team members recall his willingness to do anything that was asked of him - always with a smile. Gabe's son remembers his father's profound dedication and loyalty to DMORT - he was proud to be part of the team.

Gabe is survived by his wife - Brenda, his parents, two sons, two daughters, ten grandchildren, and one great-grandson.

The DMORT family extends their deepest sympathy to the Hensley family.

DMORT NATIONAL NEWS

Editors:

Sheila Hall

halls@infantwelfare.org

Terry Swanson

robertaswanson@msn.com