

National Situation Report



FEMA

As of 5:30 a.m. Saturday, September 10, 2005

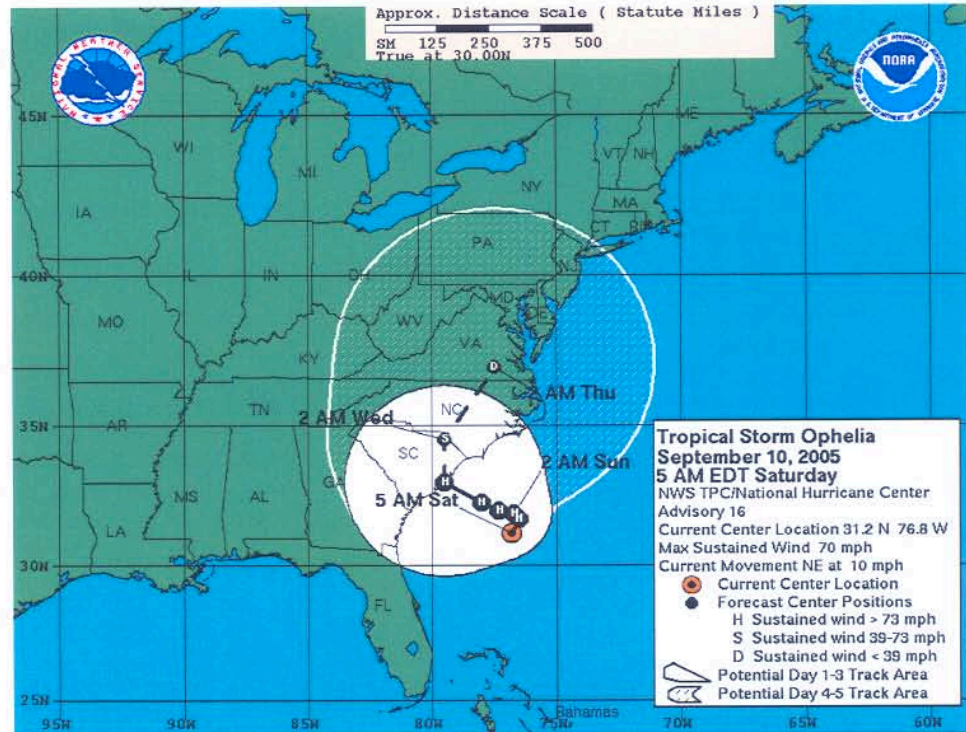
This information is provided as a public service. Information presented is considered public information and may be distributed or copied. Use of appropriate byline/photo/image credits is requested. Published daily by the FEMA National Response Coordination Center (NRCC). Available on the internet at: <http://www.fema.com/emanagers/natsitup.shtm>. For questions or comments, call the NRCC at (202) 646-2828 or 4541 (staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week).

Homeland Security Threat Level:

ELEVATED

Ophelia Downgraded to Tropical Storm - Could Become A Threat To The Southeast United States Coast

At 5 am EDT (0900Z) the center of Tropical Storm Ophelia was located near latitude 31.2 north...longitude 76.8 west or about 220 miles east-southeast of Charleston, South Carolina and about 240 miles south-southeast of Charleston, South Carolina.



Ophelia is moving toward the northeast near 9 mph. This motion is expected to continue through today.

Maximum sustained winds have increased to near 60 mph with gusts to 75 mph. Ophelia was downgraded to a Tropical Storm. No significant change in strength is forecast during the next 24 hours. Tropical storm force winds extend outward up to 90 miles. Estimated central pressure was 984 mb (29.09 inches). (National Hurricane Center)

Preparation for Tropical Storm Ophelia

Preparation for the potential impact of Tropical Storm Ophelia includes the following actions:

- FEMA NRCC is activated at Level I, with all ESFs present, for Hurricane Katrina and is monitoring Hurricane Ophelia.
 - NDMS will have 1 MST, 1 MNAT, 3 DMATs, and one Strike Team at Ft. Gillem, GA today (Saturday).
 - US&R will have 3 Task Forces at Ft. Gillem, GA by midnight tonight.
 - FEMA Region IV RRCC is operational 24/7.
 - Region IV is staffing two ERT-A teams to stage in Atlanta, one for South Carolina and one for a State TBD based on Ophelia's path.
 - State Liaison Officers will be at the State EOCs for South Carolina, Georgia, and North Carolina this afternoon. These Liaisons are in addition to Liaisons supporting the sheltering operation for Hurricane Katrina.
 - Movement of additional Hurricane Katrina victims into South Carolina has been stopped at the State's request until Ophelia has passed.
 - Region IV is working with ESFs 6 and 8 to assess what possible special measures can be taken for the Hurricane Katrina evacuees now in the State.
 - Region IV is now planning for the staffing of two RNA teams for the Atlantic area.
- Region VIII, IX, and X are acting as operational backups for Region IV and maintaining their RRCCs at Level 3. (FEMA HQ)

In New Orleans as It Did in New York, X Marks the Pain

A crude symbol has surfaced in New Orleans to displace for now the fleur-de-lis, the crescent and the string of beads. It is a large X sprayed with neon-orange paint onto the emptied homes, the violated stores - even the city buses that litter streets like giant discarded milk cartons.

The fleur-de-lis reflects the enduring French influence on life here. The crescent symbolizes the bend in the nurturing Mississippi River. The beads evoke Mardi Gras, though these days they dangle from trees like gaudy nooses. And now, scrawled across all of that, a large X the color of Halloween: the post-catastrophe symbol used by search-and-rescue units to signal that the space inside has been checked for signs of life or the remains of death.

On Tuesday a task force from Texas, armed with guns and spray cans, decorated the Bywater section here with the macabre graffiti. At the top of the X, the date (9/6); to the left, the unit that conducted the search (TXTF); to the right, the number of hazards, structural and otherwise, within (0); and at the bottom, the number of dead (0).

The symbol has haunting resonance for those who walked the gray-powdered streets of Lower Manhattan in the first days after 9/11. Four years later nearly to the day, you notice that X on a deserted storefront on St. Claude Avenue here; you take comfort in seeing zeroes; and in a finger's snap you are back there on Vesey Street, or Liberty, or Church. What's more, the skies over southern Louisiana have been a baby blue the last few days, as they were over New York on that Tuesday morning.

So many images here set off dormant memories. The National Guard encampment in Audubon Park recalls the National Guard encampment in Battery Park, where a thunderstorm one night had people imagining another attack. The whiff of rotting food in a market on St. Charles Avenue brings back the pungency of that dusty still-life display of food rotting in the Amish Market on Washington Street. The fear of contaminated water now; the fear of contaminated air then.

A disturbing question comes too quickly to the mind. Which was worse: the attacks of Sept. 11 or the attack of Hurricane Katrina?

The question reflects our strange desire to quantify disaster. Any time a jetliner crashes - in Lockerbie, outside Pittsburgh, off the Moriches - the news media rush to point out its standing in terms of the number killed, as though measuring its worthiness for some sorrowful hall of fame. Sometimes newspapers will even publish an accompanying graph: Five Deadliest Plane Crashes.

From the acrid-smelling streets of this fresh horror, near the fourth anniversary of another horror - still fresh in its own way - such calculus seems fruitless, inappropriate and akin to comparing a wounded apple to an injured orange. They are distinct in their own awful ways.

The hurricane was a natural disaster. The disaster of 9/11 was madman-made. The hurricane exploded across hundreds of miles, devastating cities, towns and obscure places that many people here barely knew of; Happy Jack, for one. The jetliners that became bombs on 9/11 devastated a corner of Manhattan, and brought down two of the most famous buildings in the world.

On and on the distinctions go: 9/11's fire to the hurricane's water; people dying at work and people drowning at home; congregations mourning in places of worship and congregations mourning for places of worship that are now inaccessible, under water, destroyed.

Rather than wasting energy and emotion on that awkward question of which is worse, those profoundly affected by 9/11 might consider what now forever binds the New Orleans of 2005 to other American cities: the Johnstown of 1889; the Galveston of 1900; the San Francisco of 1906; the Oklahoma City of 1995; the New York of 2001.

The overwhelming loss of life, of course, and the crippling tolls to the economy, to the infrastructure, to the community's sense of self. But more than that: the denial of that basic, sacred need to claim and bury the dead. Four years have passed, and 1,152 of the 2,749 victims of 9/11 have not been identified. Two weeks have passed, and who knows how many bodies still remain in New Orleans.

Which is worse? Let the question go.

Just know that emergency telephone numbers and wrenching news updates trickle across the television screens here, just as they did then. That volunteers from across the country are here to help out, just as they did then. That people here vow to rebuild, just as we did then.

One night four years ago, a city sanitation worker started sweeping the debris of chaos from Church Street. And one afternoon this week, a shopkeeper on deserted Royal Street did the same. *(Media Sources)*

Active Sunspot Group Continues to Produce Significant Flares (Follow-up to Wednesday September 7th Report)

NOAA sunspot Region 808, which yielded a powerful X17 flare (R4 radio blackout - on a scale from R1 to R5) on Wednesday September 7th, continues to produce significant activity. Over the past 24 hours, this region produced several more major flares to include three X-class (major) flares, which resulted in R3 radio blackouts, and several M-class (medium) flares producing R1 and R2 radio blackouts. An S2 radiation storm began soon after the X17 flare on September 7th and remains in progress.

Active Region 808 is currently located near the southeast limb of the visible solar surface. This region is a large and very complex sunspot cluster, which is still rotating into view. Early indications are that it is almost nine times the size of Earth. Over the next several days this region will rotate towards center disk where solar activity is much more likely to impact Earth. A powerful and very fast coronal mass ejection (CME) accompanied the X17 flare on September 7th. The magnetic cloud associated with this CME will not directly impact Earth; however, a lesser impact is expected today which will likely result in G1 through G3 (on a scale from G1 to G5) geomagnetic storm conditions.

Expect continued significant solar flares from this region as it makes its passage across the visible disk over the next 11 days. Radiation storms in the S3 or even S4 levels (on a scale from S1 to S5) are possible. Significant geomagnetic storms are likely, beginning early next week as this region moves towards the center of the visible side of the Sun.

Communications groups are already experiencing problems due to this activity. Air Traffic controllers have had to reroute communications to some flights, especially trans-oceanic flights. NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) has stepped up monitoring of space radiation effects for the astronauts on the International Space Station. Other agencies impacted by space weather are at increasing risk for disruption. These include spacecraft operations and other space activities, electric power systems, HF (high frequency) communications, and navigation systems such as GPS (Global Positioning System). (*NOAA National Weather Service (NWS) Space Environment Center (SEC)*)

INCIDENT REPORT VII – 04

Hurricane Katrina Evacuees – Regional Response; September 9, 2005 1600 CDT

As resources to the south are exhausted and shelters begin to reach their capacity, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska officials continue to prepare to potentially accept evacuees from impacted areas. Per the EMAC broadcast made late last night, states within Region VII may begin receiving evacuees as follows: Nebraska on Saturday, September 10 and Missouri and Kansas on Monday, September 12. The number of evacuees to be transported each day and the number of days the effort will continue will vary and can change. States may receive a maximum of 500 evacuees on their scheduled day, or less, depending on their pre-identified shelter capacity.

Iowa

The State of Iowa received 19 evacuees today. The evacuees were transported to the initial reception center for processing. Evacuees will be given hotel rooms for the evening. State officials have heard that another flight (6:15 CDT) to Des Moines may bring more evacuees to the state.

Kansas: The state remains on stand-by for receiving evacuees.

Missouri: The state remains on stand-by for receiving evacuees.

Nebraska: The state remains on stand-by for receiving evacuees

The FEMA Region VII Offices are activated at a Level 3 – Monitoring/minimal staffing. Operational hours are 0700-1630 CDT - Monday-Friday. (*FEMA Region VII*)

National Weather

South: Ophelia has edged far enough out to sea to keep rain and wind effects minimal for the Southeast Coast, but rip currents, high surf and beach erosion will be ongoing problems through the weekend. Late tomorrow into Monday Ophelia could loop back to the Southeast Coast and become a potentially nasty player in the weather for Georgia and the Carolinas. Residents and visitors across the coastal region will need to be monitoring Ophelia closely and be ready to take cover as the hurricane heads to the coast and then inland. Elsewhere across the South, parts of Texas will see some thunderstorms over the next few days, but the remainder of the region will be dry with temperatures near or above mid-September averages which translates into 80s and 90s.

Midwest: A cold front will inch from western North Dakota to a line from Upper Michigan to Kansas by midweek. Temperatures will be in the 80s and 90s ahead of the front, 5 to 20 degrees above average. Chicago could be 3 degrees shy of record high ties tomorrow and Monday. Somewhat cooler air (up to 5 degrees below average) will filter in behind the front with temperatures in the 60s and 70s from the Dakotas to Upper Michigan and Wisconsin by midweek. Scattered thunderstorms will pop ahead of the front from the Plains to the Great Lakes and a few of the storms could turn severe.

Northeast: High pressure originating out of eastern Canada will bring a beautiful weekend to the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic. A chilly start this morning and tomorrow morning across Upstate New York and northern New England could bring some patchy frost. Weekend highs will range from the 60s in northern Maine to the 80s in the Virginias. The fronts will stay north of the region so high temperatures will be up to 10 degrees above average Monday through Thursday which translates into plenty of 80s. The first rain chance will be Thursday and it's not out of the question that some of the moisture from Ophelia could eventually work its way into at least the Mid-Atlantic States beyond midweek.

West: Even as the warmth lingers in parts of the High Plains and Southwest this weekend, a strong cold front aligned from Wyoming to the San Joaquin Valley will put a large chunk of the West in the below-average temperature column. In fact, daytime temperatures could be as much as 15 degrees below average in western Montana and Idaho today which means 40s, 50s and 60s. Showers and a few thunderstorms will dot the interior Northwest through the weekend. Snow levels could drop to 6000 feet over the eastern slopes of the Montana Rockies today and tonight. Scattered thunderstorms will pop both weekend days over the mountains and adjacent lower elevations of the Four Corners' states. (NWS, Media Sources)

Wildfire Update

National Preparedness Level 4

CURRENT SITUATION: Initial attack activity was light nationally with 114 fires reported. Four new large fires were reported, two in the Northwest Area, and one each in the Southern and Southwest Areas. Three large fires were contained, one in the Southern and two in the Eastern Great Basin Area. Very high to extreme fire indices were reported in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

A Presidential Disaster Declaration was issued on 8/29 for Hurricane Katrina in Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana. Two Area Command Teams are assigned (Williams-Rhodes and Ribar). Williams-Rhodes' Team is providing Incident Management Team coordination for FEMA Region IV at the Regional Response Coordination Center in Atlanta, GA for Hurricane Katrina Support. Ribar's Team is assigned to the Louisiana Emergency Operations Center in Baton Rouge, LA. The Team is coordinating activities of the Incident Management Teams in FEMA Region VI. Numerous resources are being mobilized as part of the relief effort.

OUTLOOK:

Red Flag Warning: For southeast and south central Idaho for strong winds and low relative humidity. For most of southern and southeastern Montana for gusty winds, high temperatures and low relative humidity. For parts of eastern, central and southern Nevada due to gusty winds and low relative humidity.

Fire Weather Watch: For northeast Wyoming for strong winds and low relative humidity.

Weather Discussion: The upper low which was off the California coast on Thursday will be moving across the Great Basin today. Also, a strong low pressure trough will be sweeping into the Pacific Northwest with cooler temperatures and showers. The combination of these two systems will also bring strong winds and thunderstorms to portions of the intermountain West. Along the Gulf Coast, it will be partly cloudy with highs in the lower 90s.

Arizona

NEW Tank (Kaibab National Forest): This lightning-caused Wildland Fire Use (WFU) incident is 14 miles southeast of Williams and is burning in oak and pine litter. This incident is being managed to accomplish resource objectives. A lookout and a wildlife habitat are threatened. Structure protection is in place. Light precipitation over the fire area resulted in minimal activity.

California

Volcan (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Monte Vista Unit): 685 acres at 40 percent contained. This fire is two miles north of Julian and is burning in grass and timber understory. Road closures remain in effect. A high number of snags are hampering containment efforts. Spotting, torching and smoldering were reported.

Idaho

Fort Hall (Fort Hall Agency, Bureau of Indian Affairs): 18,397 acres at 77 percent contained. This complex, comprised of the Rattlesnake and Sawmill fires, is 16 miles south and east of Pocatello, ID in grass, brush, litter and timber. Steep, inaccessible terrain continues to hamper containment efforts. Minimal growth was reported.

Harpers Bend (Craig Mountain Area Office, Idaho Department of Lands): 380 acres at 60 percent contained. This fire is two miles northwest of Peck, ID in grass, understory and timber. Residences and other structures remain threatened. Steep terrain and limited access continue to hamper containment efforts. Surface fire and some spotting were observed.

Long Black Complex (Clearwater National Forest): 2,160 acres at 10 percent contained. This complex, comprised of the Long Creek and Black Canyon fires, is 38 miles northeast of Pierce. A commercial property is threatened. Steep terrain and limited access continue to hamper containment efforts. Creeping fire and isolated torching were reported.

Valley Road (Sawtooth National Forest): 15,312 acres at 20 percent contained. This fire is 15 miles south of Stanley, and is burning in timber. Residences, commercial property, a work center, wildlife habitat, campgrounds and recreation areas remain threatened. Area closures and evacuations remain in effect for residents and campers. Structure protection remains in place. Plume dominated fire behavior with running, crowning and long range spotting was observed.

Big Dry Canyon (Caribou-Targhee National Forest): 1,265 acres. This lightning caused Wildland Fire Use (WFU) incident is 10 miles west of Swan Valley. The fire is being managed to accomplish resource objectives. One cabin is threatened. Structure protection is in place. Backing fire with isolated torching was reported.

Frank Church (Payette National Forest): 42,614 acres. This lightning caused Wildland Fire Use (WFU) incident, comprised of the Bear Creek, Root Creek, West Fork/Joe, Missouri Ridge and several other fires is 50 miles northeast of McCall, ID in timber. The fire is being managed to accomplish resource objectives. Historic structures, mines and cabins remain potentially threatened. Structure protection remains in place. Remote location and difficult access are impeding operations. Surface fire and isolated torching were reported.

Montana

Signal Rock (Beaverhead/Deerlodge National Forest): 12,500 acres at 10 percent contained. The fire is 17 miles southwest of Philipsburg and is burning on both the Bitterroot and Beaverhead/Deerlodge National Forests. Active fire with crown runs was reported.

Selway-Salmon Complex (Bitterroot National Forest): 32,529 acres. This lightning caused Wildland Fire Use (WFU) complex, comprised of the El Capitan, Wapiti, Beaverjack, Reynolds and numerous other fires, is 26 miles southwest of Hamilton, MT in timber. This complex is burning on both the Salmon-Challis and Bitterroot National Forests and is being managed to accomplish resource objectives. A historic ranger station, a work center and a lookout remain threatened. Structure protection remains in place. Trail closures remain in effect. Active fire behavior with torching was observed.

Oregon

NEW Pine Stub (Prineville District, Bureau of Land Management): 500 acres at zero percent contained. This fire is eight miles east of Post and is burning in grass, sage brush, juniper and timber. Active fire behavior with running, spotting

Granite Complex (Wallowa-Whitman National Forest): 36,299 acres. This lightning-caused WFU incident is 30 miles east of Enterprise and is burning in timber and grass. This complex is

being managed to accomplish resource objectives. Historic structures and a communications site are threatened. Creeping, smoldering and isolated torching were observed.

Washington

NEW Squaw Creek (Northeast Region, Department of Natural Resources): 600 acres at zero percent contained. This fire is located 3 miles southwest of Methow and is burning in timber. Residences and other structures are threatened. Running, spotting and torching were observed. *(National Interagency Fire Center, National Interagency Information Center)*

Other Tropical Cyclone Activity

Tropical Storm Maria is located about 715 miles east-southeast of Cape Race, Newfoundland, moving toward the northeast at about 16 mph. This motion is expected to continue with an increase in forward speed during the next 24 hours.

Hurricane Nate is located about 890 miles east-northeast of Bermuda, and is moving toward the east near 24 mph. This motion is expected to continue for the next 24 hours followed by a gradual turn to the northeast. Nate is expected to gradually weaken over the next 24 hours.

Tropical Storm 15W (Khanun) does not pose any threat to any U.S. interests. *(National Hurricane Center, Joint Typhoon Warning Center)*

Earthquake Activity

No significant activity to report. There were minor earthquakes in the Los Angeles area, southern Utah, and central Alaska. *(USGS National Earthquake Information Center)*

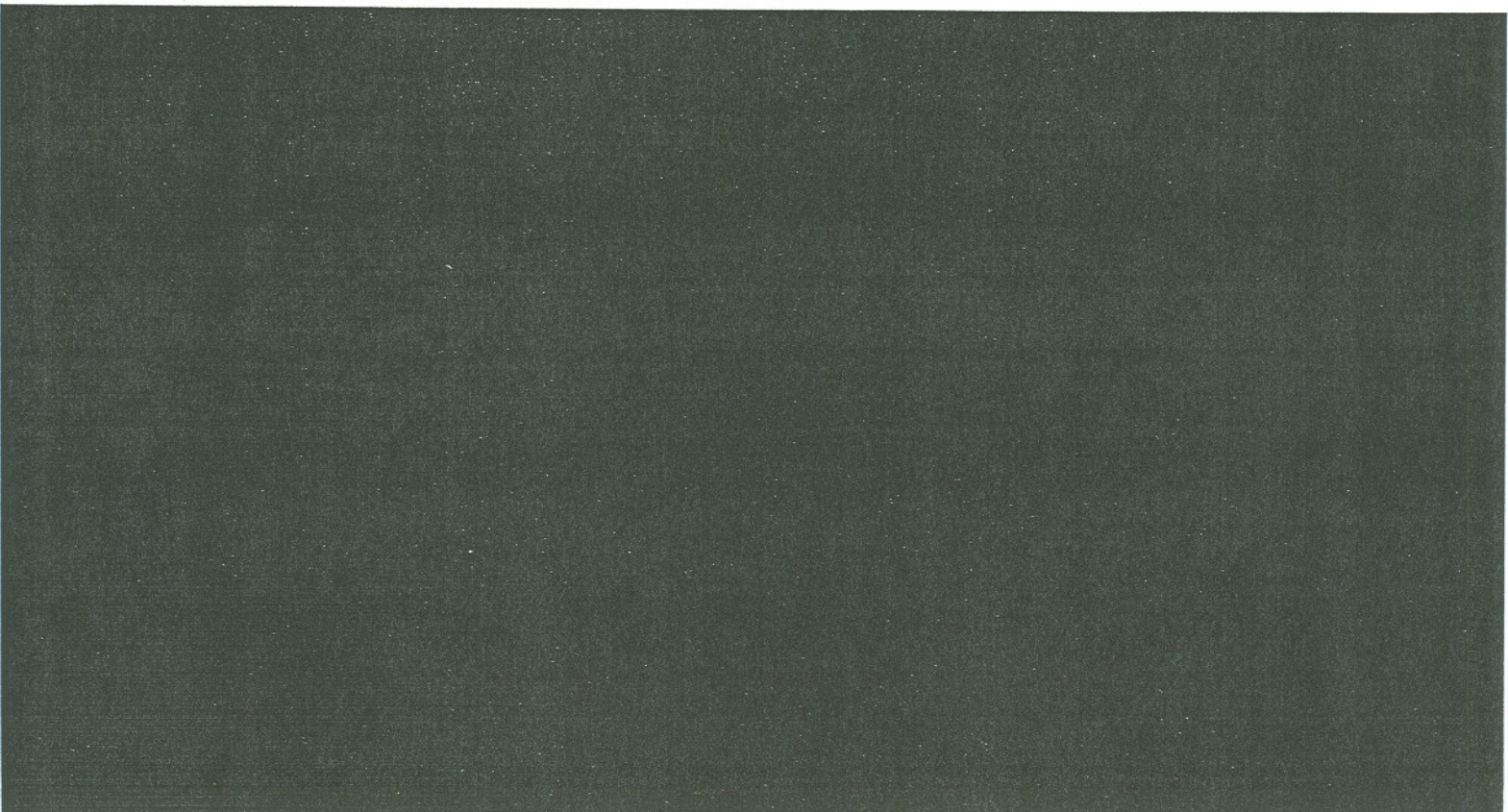
Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDAs)

No new activity to report. *(FEMA HQ)*

Disaster Declaration Activity

FEMA-1602-DR-FL was amended closing the Disaster Period on September 6, 2005. *(FEMA HQ)*

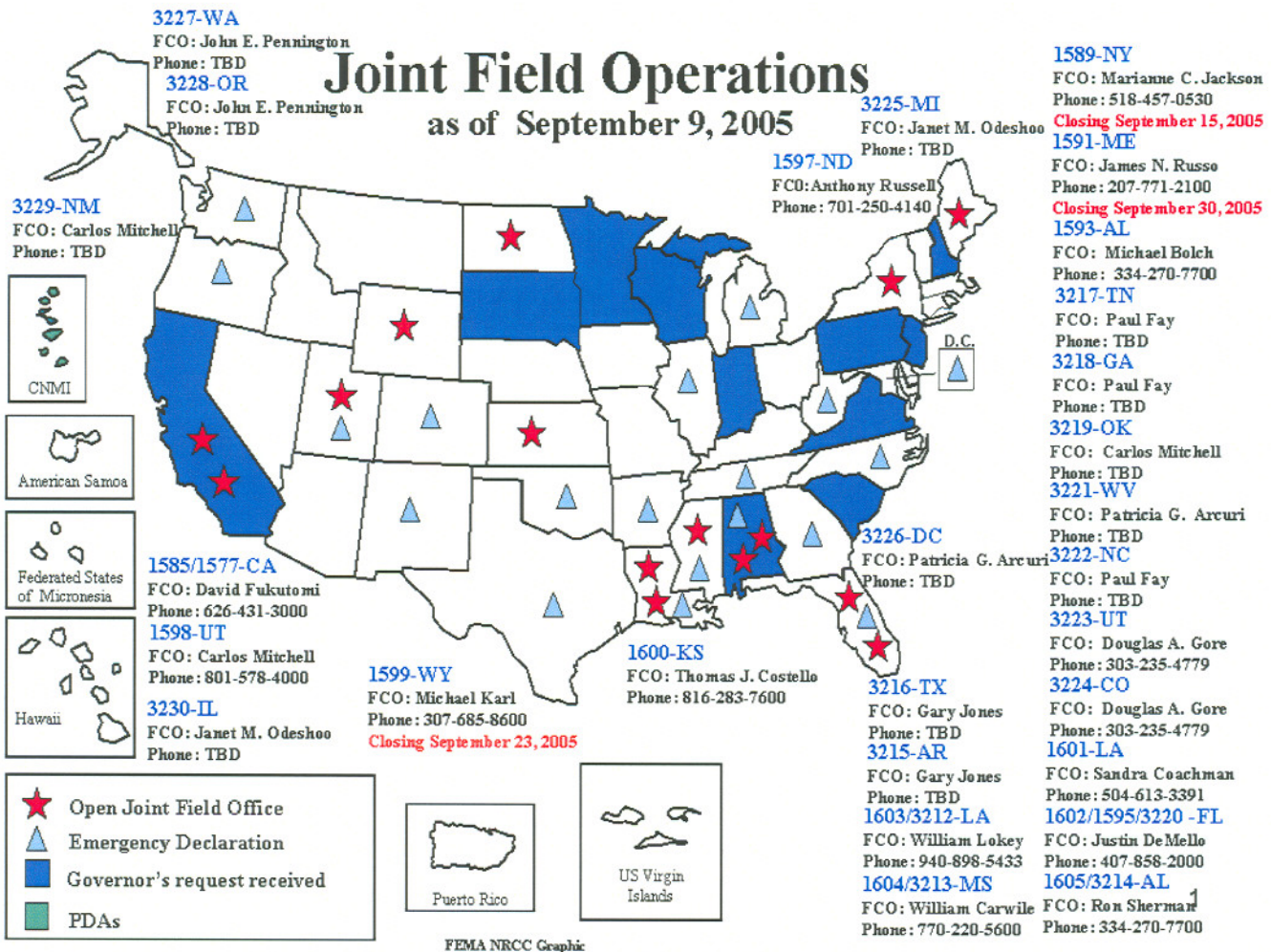
FEMA Readiness Alert Status:



Disaster Teleregistration Activity Chart

DR	Incident Type	09/08/05	Cumulative
1605-AL	Hurricane Katrina	1,908	31,808
1604-MS	Hurricane Katrina	15,397	101,547
1603-LA	Hurricane Katrina	48,172	364,838
1599-WY	Tornado	9	239
1595-FL	Hurricane Dennis	97	39,982
1593-AL	Hurricane Dennis	33	13,927
Total		65,616	552,341

Joint Field Operations as of September 9, 2005



The FEMA National Situation Report is prepared by the FEMA National Response Coordination Center (NRCC). Questions can be addressed to NRCC watch officers via phone at 202-646-2828/4541 (staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week), via fax at 202-646-4617, or via e-mail at FEMA-NRCC@dhs.gov.