

## HURRICANE JUDY TABLE TOP EXERCISE for CAMPUS DEPARTMENTS

2016

### After Action Review (AAR)

The University of West Florida (UWF) Hurricane Judy Tabletop Exercise 2016 was developed to assess and test the emergency response plans, policies, and procedures as they pertain to the University preparing for, respond to, and recovery from a major hurricane impact to the main campus. The exercise was held on July 13, 2016. The exercise's intention was to generate discussion regarding a hypothetical, simulated emergency in order to enhance general awareness, validate plans and procedures, and rehearse concepts during an incident. Training and planning are critical elements of the preparedness program for any type of emergency incident, natural, or otherwise. In addition, a major component of the exercise was also to test the ability of the University and outside agencies to work cooperatively during a crisis situation.

The scenario for the exercise was based on a major hurricane heading towards and impacting UWF. The exercise was broken up into three modules: Pre-Landfall, Immediate Post Storm and Recovery Operations. The Exercise participants review the situation for each module and engage in functional group discussions of appropriate protection, mitigation, and response issues.

The exercise was designed to test specific core capabilities such as:

- Planning
- Operational Coordination
- Risk Management

Specific Objectives were to test:

- **Planning** - Assess how well the various campus departments are prepared to respond to a hurricane.
- **Operational Coordination** - Assess the ability of campus departments to coordinate on-scene operations by establishing an Incident Command structure within the framework of Incident Command System (ICS) procedures in addition to other post storm activities.
- **Risk Management** - Identification of gaps in response plans and procedures and the ability of UWF to recover from a major hurricane impact.

Given the level of complexity surrounding a response action prior to, post and recovery from a major hurricane, a full range of personnel from many UWF Departments and outside community agencies were gathered to participate in the exercise. The departments and agencies included:

#### Escambia County

- Emergency Management

#### Florida Department of Health (FDOH)

## American Red Cross (ARC)

### University of West Florida

- Office of the Provost
- Facilities Planning and Construction
- Facility Maintenance
- Utilities
- Building and Grounds
- Police Department
- Marketing and Communications
- Environmental Health and Safety
- Human Resources
- Procurement and Contracts
- Internal Auditing and Compliance
- Dean of Students
- Housing and Residence Life
- Business and Auxiliary Services
- WUWF Radio Station
- University Commons and Student Involvement
- Recreation and Sports Services

At the conclusion of the exercise, an After Action Review (AAR) was conducted to assess strengths and weaknesses which were brought out by the discussions. The following information provides a summary of strengths, observed areas for improvement and proposed corrective actions:

### **Objective 1: Planning**

#### **Key Issues**

- Preparations by Campus Departments
- Notification to Campus Community
- Coordination with Community Partners

#### **Strengths:**

- a. All responding departments have good plans in place.
- b. Facilities is well versed in preparing the campus for hurricanes or other natural disasters.
- c. Marketing and Communications has an excellent plan and considerable experience regarding continuous notification of the campus community.
- d. Responding departments have strong support from the Senior Administration.
- e. Seems to be good coordination between departments.
- f. Departments have learned from past events and have implemented changes to their respective Emergency Operations Plan (EOP).
- g. Campus Communications and Facilities preparations plans are strong.

#### **Area for Improvement:**

- a. Need an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for Campus.
- b. The issue of who are “Essential” personnel needs to be better clarified.

- c. Shelter in place plans for residence halls needs to be tightened up.
- d. Plan for sheltering students with special needs requires improvement.
- e. Ensure faculty/staff are aware of prohibition of staying in campus buildings during hurricanes.
- f. Recommend each department train their employees annually on actions to be taken during emergencies.

## **Objective 2: Operational Coordination**

### **Key Issues**

- Campus operations will be severely affected.
- UWF must now manage the aftermath of the hurricane.
- Can your operation function?

### **Strengths:**

- a. Staff have experience with crisis situations.
- b. Strong working relationship with outside agencies
- c.

### **Area for Improvement:**

- a. Not enough communication between departments regarding their individual plans for an emergency.
- b. Investigate the possibilities of a Call Center.
- c. Ensure awareness by faculty/staff of procedures for readying offices for closure.
- d.

## **Objective 3: Risk Management**

### **Key Issues**

- Ability to complete the semester
- Student Housing and other student services
- Restoration of facilities
- Cost recovery efforts

### **Strengths:**

- a. Financial Services, Human Resources and ITS have excellent plans to continuing functioning after the storm.
- b. Academic Affairs has experience with long closures caused by hurricane Ivan.
- c. Facilities has contracts in place for recovery efforts.
- d. Project Management department has well organized plan to assess, survey and document the campus for damage.
- e. Marketing and Communications has good plans in place to keep the campus community aware of the status of the UWF campus.
- f. WUWF Radio
- g. EH&S and Internal Auditing are familiar with dealing with FEMA, DEM and DRM claims.
- h. Housing and Residence Life has experience with handling student dislocation.

**Areas for Improvement:**

- a. Work on a Post-Storm plan for students if UWF is unable to open for an extended time after the storm.
- b. Look into possibility of using Confluence for documenting time and loss information for reimbursements.
- c. Academic Affairs needs to formalize and document their plans.
- d. Contractors on the SUS Disaster Recovery contracts should be brought to campus prior to impact and assess potential UWF needs.

The participants discussed the need to actively work towards taking corrective actions to fill gaps in our Core Capabilities as noted during the table top exercise.