

# INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعية الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

## UNITED STATES: HURRICANE KATRINA

2 September 2005

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

### In Brief

This Bulletin (no. 04/2005) is being issued for information only, and is based on information from the American Red Cross (ARC), and reflects the status of the situation and information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time. The American Red Cross webpage ([www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)) contains additional information on the evolving situation, the relief response to Hurricane Katrina, as well as information on donating to the National Disaster Relief Fund. To access information in Spanish please refer to the ARC Spanish webpage [www.cruzrojaamericana.org](http://www.cruzrojaamericana.org) or call toll-free 1-800-257-7575

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

**An 82-year old refugee from New Orleans is transported to a Dallas shelter by paramedics**

### The Situation

Five days after Hurricane Katrina first hit land on the gulf coast of the US (Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi), rescue, relief, and assistance efforts are being geared up to attempt to deal with the enormity of the destruction. Accurate estimates of the dead, injured, and missing continue to be unavailable, but the latest unofficial reports



from authorities project the death toll to be in the thousands. In addition to the immediate rescue efforts currently underway, there are concerns over the potential outbreak of water-borne diseases, and the provision of medical care for those most in need. Given the desperate situation faced by those affected, priority activities are also focused on shelter, the delivery of food, clean water for drinking and bathing, and the provision of non-food items in the form of blankets, clothes, utensils, and other daily needs.

## **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

The largest natural disaster relief effort in the 125-year history of the American Red Cross (ARC) has been launched in response to the devastation wreaked by Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent flooding in New Orleans. The Red Cross has more than 275 shelters spanning 16 states with another 104 shelters on standby, if needed. The American Red Cross is working with its partners to sustain life by providing rescue food and shelter to Katrina's victims—residents of an area stretching over 90,000 square miles. The American Red Cross has served more than 170,000 hot meals in the last 24 hours, still with the aim of building up the capacity to provide close to (or over) 500,000 meals per day. Working with Texas authorities, the Red Cross is providing shelter for 25,000 victims who are traveling over 300 miles from New Orleans to Houston for refuge.

The Red Cross is moving more than 600 additional volunteers and staff into the affected areas every day to join the thousands who are already on the scene bringing hope to disaster victims. Already more than 3,300 volunteers are working to deliver assistance to do what the Red Cross does best -- helping their neighbors in need. From mental health counselors trained specifically in meeting the emotional needs of disaster victims to retirees driving emergency response vehicles (ERV's) across the country, volunteers bring their own unique skills and experiences with them from every corner of the United States.

Through the tremendous generosity of the American people, the ARC is progressively and swiftly gearing up to provide prolonged assistance and services necessary to meet the desperate needs of Katrina's victims. Responding to a call for international assistance, other national societies from around the world are contacting the International Federation to arrange assistance (logistics personnel). A detailed summary list will be made available shortly.

The American Red Cross advises the public that the best way to help is by making an online contribution to the Disaster Relief Fund at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

## **Community Services**

### **Shelter**

The Red Cross is being asked to establish support shelters for evacuees in other parts of the country including Oklahoma, Utah, Missouri and Washington DC. The ARC is responding to these requests.

### **Feeding**

Mississippi:

- 8 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) kitchens currently cooking.
- 1 Pentecostal kitchen currently cooking.
- 5 SBC onsite but not yet cooking.

Alabama:

- 1 SBC kitchen currently cooking.
- 1 Woodsman of the World kitchen currently cooking.
- 1 SBC kitchen onsite but not yet cooking.

Louisiana:

- 7 SBC kitchens currently cooking.
- 3 SBC kitchens on site but not yet cooking.

## **Material Support Services**

### **Logistics**

The following has been sent (being transported), or is being arranged:

- 1,000 vests to Montgomery, Alabama; 100 vests to Houston, Texas; 1,000 vests to Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
- 25,000 cots and blankets to the Houston Astrodome.
- 10 generators to Louisiana.
- 205 ERV's continue arriving in Baton Rouge Louisiana and Montgomery Alabama, and various chapters in Mississippi.
- MSS staff arriving at Astrodome.
- 5,000 cots/blankets and comfort kits.
- Water donated by the government arriving at the Baton Rouge warehouse.
- Working with Southern Baptist and Sysco on food procurement for kitchen sites.
- Continue working on equipment for kitchens through the government.

### **Safety and Security**

Security and off duty law enforcement is being made available for the disaster relief operation (DRO), and to provide security for ARC kitchens. Efforts are underway to identify nationwide contract security companies that may be available to provide security on the DRO.

### **Response Technology**

The Montgomery Radio Club has offered their Mobile Communications vehicle, and the ARC is currently setting up their mission site. Radio communications from Montgomery are being set up to shelters in the service area

### **Organizational Support**

#### **Public Affairs**

The Public Affairs team reports fielding over 100 media calls per hour. RRT members are doing media interviews in Baton Rouge and Houston. Seasoned communicators have been deployed to chapters in Texas and other places where there are shelters. Three major news releases are going out today. Public Affairs teams have been sent to the relief operations and leadership replacements are being lined up.

#### **Fundraising**

A large donor call is being organized today, and preparations are underway for the NBC TV telethon on Friday 2 September from 8-9PM (U.S. time). A large influx of donations is being managed. The ARC estimates that as of 2 September (a.m.), some \$196.9 million in gifts and pledges had been received for the hurricane relief effort. Online donations through Redcross.org are record-breaking, making up \$110.6 million, or 56% of total donations. As a comparison, the highest call volume day during the 2004 hurricanes yielded 27,657 calls (*not donations*); during the Tsunami telethons (peak days) 72,404 calls were yielded on 15 January 2005; on August 30 2005 (latest complete day available), call volumes reached more than 100,000.

#### **Individual Client Services**

The Partners for Effective Emergency Response (PEER) program is up and running. Disaster Services Human Resources (DSHR) senior associates were briefed on the program during the 2 September conference call. PEER is working with the Public Health Physicians Group.

The ARC's Health Services greatest challenge is communications with staff. Uncertainties remain on needs and their location. There is overwhelming interest from the medical community to respond to the needs. Presently a list of potential volunteers to serve is being built, and the process of training volunteers will begin. Client Services is working with the ICRC to use Family Links on their web site.

#### **Partner Services**

#### **Government/Emergency Management Liaison**

Red Cross liaisons deployed to the Emergency Operations Centers (EOC's) in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama are working diligently to support the mass care needs of the affected populations by sharing critical response information, offers and requests to state emergency management partners. The Alabama and Mississippi State EOCs are looking to transition operations to the Joint Field Offices as they are opened in both states over the

next two days. As the Disaster Relief Operations are established, the Partner Services teams have established clear lines of communication and authority from local, state and federal operations centers across the Gulf Coast to best support the relief operation.

- Alabama: the EOC is activated, 7 AM to 7 PM hours daily, with a Red Cross liaison present.
- Louisiana: the EOC is activated 24/7 and a Red Cross liaison team is present.
- Florida: Florida's EOC remains activated with Red Cross liaisons present and supporting the south Florida response and recovery. The state is planning to move mass care disaster response resources from Florida in to the gulf coast to assist with this unprecedented event.
- Mississippi: the EOC is fully activated.
- Illinois: The EOC has been activated to provide support mass care requests out of Arkansas. A Red Cross liaison is present to support the movement of mass care goods and services.
- Tennessee: Tennessee Emergency Management Agency re-activated its State EOC yesterday to coordinate disaster response activities. A Red Cross liaison is present to facilitate requests.
- Texas: The Texas State EOC activated yesterday and is operational 24/7. An ARC liaison has been deployed to cover the EOC from 08:00 to 22:00.

### **Non-Government**

The non-traditional volunteer recruitment program targeting voluntary agencies was launched today (2 September). ARC voluntary agencies will distribute communications and instructions regarding how to volunteer to their members and parishioners. The Coordinated Assistance Network has been activated to support Mass Care

### **Labor Liaison**

Carpenters in Mobile are opening up their training site for shelter. The Operating Engineers are providing a tractor trailer of water and it is on its way to now to Mobile, Alabama. The AFL-CIO is working with the ARC national headquarters labor liaison to coordinate the recruitment of 1,000 volunteers. The UAW is sending a volunteer representative to work with our ARC labor liaison in Baton Rouge to coordinate activities

### **Voluntary Agency Liaison**

Many churches of all denominations are damaged or underwater in the affected areas. UMCOR cannot reach 45 of their ministers. 26 of the Presbyterian Churches in New Orleans are under water The Presbyterian Church is providing shelter training for those churches that are requesting support. Fuel to deliver truck loads of supplies is scarce. Lutherans are working with social service agencies in Louisiana to relocate children in group homes and shelters. Out of state relocation is complicated by state of origin issues. Lutherans are also speaking with dredge boat owners because the boats have dormitories that can house 50-300 people.

America's second harvest has delivered 1 million pounds of food to Baton Rouge to 2 locations, the Bay Area and Jackson, Mississippi. Adventists are planning multi-agency warehousing in Jackson, Mobile, Alexandria and the Houston Astrodome.

### **Community Relations Liaison**

The ARC community liaison is on the ground in Baton Rouge gathering data, and stresses to staff and volunteers that it is important to take into account the demographics of the population reports to be sensitive to the issues that are occurring and that will arise. There is a need to recruit as many people as possible in this activity.

### **Biomedical**

Alabama & Gulf Coast have lost 600 units of blood due to cancelled drives. Projected loss for the week is 1,000 units. Alabama & Gulf Coast reports the shortage of gasoline in Mobile may impact on operations. The Biloxi chapter is considering the use of the collections facility for relief operations.

### **Response and Activation of Other Agencies for Hurricane Katrina**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) deployed more than 50 Disaster Medical Assistance Teams from across the U.S. to staging areas in Alabama, Tennessee, Texas, and Louisiana and is now moving them to affected areas. Twenty-seven pallets of medical supplies from the Strategic National Stockpile are being sent to open a mobile hospital at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. Supplies include basic first aid materials, blankets, patient clothing, suture kits, sterile gloves, stethoscopes, blood pressure measuring kits, and

portable oxygen units. The USDA's Food and Nutrition Service is providing food at shelters and mass feeding sites, issuing food stamps, infant formula, and food packages to households in need. The Department of Transportation has provided 1,700 trucks to convey 5.4 million ready-to-eat meals, 13.4 million liters of water, 10,400 tarps, 3.4 million pounds of ice, 144 generators, and 20 containers of pre-positioned disaster supplies, 135,000 blankets and 11,000 cots.

Health and Human Services has declared a public health emergency in the area stretching from Louisiana to Florida. They are gravely concerned about the potential for cholera, typhoid and dehydrating diseases that could come as a result of the stagnant water and conditions. They are erecting a network of up to 40 medical shelters which collectively will have 10,000 beds and be staffed by some 4,000 qualified personnel.

The BellSouth Corporation reports almost 81,000 wired phones lines were silent in southeastern Louisiana and more are expected to fail as backup generators run out of fuel. Wireless phone networks providers Cingular Wireless and Verizon Wireless report similar trouble. Crews have reportedly completed clearing work on all state highways.

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