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**MSOMOBINST 16601A**  
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## **USCG MSO MOBILE INSTRUCTION 16601A**

### **Subj: COASTAL SEVERE WEATHER/HURRICANE PLAN**

Ref: (a) Coastal Severe Weather/Hurricane Plan, D8INST 3010.1  
(b) U. S. Coast Guard Field Operations Guide Incident Command System (ICS)

1. Purpose. This Instruction establishes the severe weather/hurricane operations plan for Coast Guard Marine Safety Office Mobile. This plan will be in effect whenever the COTP Mobile Area of Responsibility (AOR) enters Hurricane Condition Five. All personnel must be familiar with references (a) and (b). NIIMS ICS will be utilized within the Mobile AOR to respond to all coastal severe weather/hurricane events; a Coast Guard Incident Command Post (ICP) will be established within the local area to coordinate response operations. See enclosure (1).
2. Directives Affected. MSOMOBINST 16601, Unit Hurricane Procedures, dated 01 June 1998, is hereby cancelled.
3. Situation.
  - a. General. Areas located adjacent to coastal waters or along rivers are susceptible to damage during severe weather conditions. District Commanders and their designated port-level operational commanders, working in conjunction with other agencies supporting the Federal Response Plan, will direct their resources toward ensuring the safety of life and the protection of property.
    - (1) The ICP is responsible for coordination between the Coast Guard and other agencies involved in port response and recovery operations following a major storm or hurricane. The ICP shall provide Coast Guard representatives to all local and State Emergency Operation Centers (EOC's) as appropriate.
    - (2) The ICP will conduct pollution response operations to ensure timely and complete coordination of emergency operations. The Incident Commander will report directly to the Eighth Coast Guard District, which will be acting as the Incident Area Commander (IAC).
  - b. Incident. Major storms can cause extensive damage to the infrastructure of the impacted area. Coast Guard fixed facilities, housing, and communications systems

could be heavily damaged or destroyed. Community utility systems, schools, civil law enforcement capability, medical facilities, and the economy in general could be seriously disrupted or incapacitated.

- c. Pre-Incident Preparations. Past experience has shown that the unit must be proactive in taking preparatory measures in anticipation of disasters. A ration of emergency supplies maintained by the unit is listed in enclosure (2). All personnel must ensure that they are personally prepared for the impact of a hurricane and available to respond after a storm has passed. The unit will allow sufficient time for personnel to take measures to protect their families and property, but it is expected that all personnel will be prepared enough ahead of time so as to require only thirty-six to forty-eight hours to make final preparations.
  
- d. Other Agencies Involved. The following is a summary of agencies that play a major role in severe weather response operations:
  - (1) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA has statutory responsibility for Federal emergency response coordination. FEMA may provide financial assistance to State and local governments, and supply them with mobile emergency communications centers, supplies, and equipment. FEMA also can provide emergency assistance to victims of severe weather.
  - (2) National Weather Service (NWS). NWS publishes weather forecasts, reports, and warnings for the United States and its possessions.
  - (3) Department of Transportation Emergency Organization. The DOT Emergency Organization is coordinated through FEMA and tasked by Executive and DOT Orders with marshalling, regulating, and facilitating the use of transportation resources (commercial and private air, rail, highway, and sea transport) to support disaster relief operations.
  - (4) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). ACOE publishes information about river stages, flood prevention operations, evacuation procedures, and predicted flood crests. They also conduct channel depth surveys after a storm has passed and restore channels to charted depths through dredging.
  - (5) American Red Cross. The Red Cross is a private agency that has a statutory role in responding to natural disasters. Red Cross personnel often will be on scene in anticipation of a natural disaster. The Red Cross can provide local and emergency information, assist with coordination and communications, and help arrange for berthing and messing for Coast Guard personnel. However, this should only be considered in the worst of circumstances; berthing and messing for Coast Guard personnel is a command responsibility.
  - (6) Local Officials. Local government officials, especially county or city disaster relief agencies, often will be the first responders to a local emergency and may

request Coast Guard assistance. Community officials and local police can also guide the deployment of Coast Guard resources to aid storm victims. Every effort must be made to ensure the Coast Guard is represented in applicable County EOC's.

e. Assumptions.

- (1) Weather information and forecasts will be readily available.
- (2) Coast Guard facilities, personnel, and dependents will be affected by the storm.
- (3) Debris, flooding, and power outages will hamper ground transportation.
- (4) Heavy precipitation and high winds will hamper air transportation.
- (5) Coast Guard Reservists might be involuntarily recalled by order of the Secretary of Transportation. Coast Guard Reserve and Auxiliary personnel will be available to augment response operations.
- (6) Downed phone lines could result in loss of telephone communications. Widespread use of cellular phones could overload cellular phone facilities.
- (7) Response operations could continue for at least thirty days.
- (8) The ability to recover from a major storm will be beyond the ability of local Coast Guard units and communities affected.
- (9) The Eighth District will provide assets and logistical support when local resources are inadequate.
- (10) Additional funding will be provided as necessary for response and recovery operations.

f. Legal Considerations. Procedures contained within this instruction will be carried out under the authority of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster and Emergency Assistance Act (42 USC 5121), 14 USC 88, other applicable statutes, and Coast Guard regulations. The Stafford Act allows Federal agencies to recoup their costs if the expenses were incurred during a FEMA pre-approved response operation relating to a declared disaster. Units must carefully document all expenditures pursuant to heavy weather or hurricane response as they occur.

4. Mission. MSO Mobile shall initiate severe weather response operations in support of the Federal Response Plan. Upon execution of this instruction, the unit will:
  - a. Perform any immediate acts necessary to rescue and aid persons and to protect Coast Guard property.
  - b. Provide assistance to civil authorities, to the extent of available resources, in those cases where relief requirements may exceed the capabilities of such authority and established civil agencies.
  - c. Reconstitute Coast Guard forces as rapidly as possible to begin statutory responses to marine environmental protection and port safety and security issues.
  
5. Execution.
  - a. Concept of Operations. Upon execution of this instruction, the Unit and members will take actions to protect themselves (see enclosure (3)), mobilize and deploy resources as necessary, and assist State and local governments in response efforts. Disaster response is an all-hands event; all personnel may be allocated toward disaster response. Local active duty assets will be activated first. As additional resources are needed, they will be requested by the ICP. The IAC will activate and allocate resources as requested. Unit response will focus on the following support areas, in accordance with reference (a):
    - (1) Self-Preservation. Coast Guard assets and personnel must be deployed in a way that protects them from the effects of the severe weather. To this end, actions will be taken to:
      - (a) Enhance unit security to prevent loss of equipment due to pilferage, and to protect records and equipment from high water. Where feasible, transport all essential equipment to a safe and secure location, protected from wind damage and potential flooding. Institute measures to protect structures from storm-related damage.
      - (b) When directed, implement an evacuation plan for Coast Guard personnel and dependents, including procedures that will provide timely notification to dependents to prepare for evacuation.
      - (c) The Administration Office maintains an emergency rations stockpile. The inventory is located in enclosure (2). The Administration branch will maintain the inventory and check out items as needed.
    - (2) Lifesaving. The ICP may provide the following services:
      - (a) Initial response activities will be aimed solely at saving or protecting lives, including evacuating people from the affected area. Persons temporarily

sheltered at Coast Guard units should be referred to local civilian shelters as soon as practicable.

(b) Support State and local government lifesaving services as capable.

(3) Reconstitution. All necessary steps shall be taken to reconstitute Coast Guard operating assets as rapidly as possible.

(a) Assessment. The ICP shall immediately assess the damage to the unit. Submit damage assessment reports to the IAC by the fastest means available. These reports shall include an assessment of the unit's operating capability.

1. Unaffected units may be required to provide assets and personnel to the affected area.

2. The Eighth District will provide financial, logistical, and operational assistance to affected operational areas. Eighth District personnel may be deployed to speed reconstitution efforts.

3. MLCLANT will provide Emergency Response Teams (ERT's) to assist affected units in regaining their operational capabilities. ERT's consist of reconstruction, subsistence assistance, medical support teams, claims settlement officers, chaplains, and contracting officers.

(b) Statutory Response. Statutory mission areas will be prioritized based upon the impact on the AOR. **All statutory responses will be secondary to lifesaving and self-preservation.** The missions are prioritized below:

1. HAZMAT/pollution response that interferes with lifesaving.

2. Facilitating/maintaining the flow of critical supplies and services within the affected area.

3. Port safety and security.

4. Response to oil and hazardous material incidents, and ensuring their effective and efficient mitigation.

5. Commercial vessel safety.

6. Restoration of ports and waterways to normal commerce.

b. Tasks.

- (1) The Incident Commander shall:
  - (a) Ensure the Severe Weather Response Checklist contained in enclosure (4) is completed.
  - (b) Ensure the Hurricane Information for Marine Industry contained in enclosure (5) is distributed to industry.
  - (c) Ensure an effective, timely, and smooth transition to Incident Command & Control structure.
  - (d) Report **hourly** conditions and status of preparations, beginning six hours before predicated landfall and for six hours after landfall, to the Eighth District Command Center at the following number: (504) 589-6225. Determine and report, by any means available, damage, immediate needs, and operational capability as soon as possible after storm passage. Provide updates as additional needs arise. Report any circumstances that may prevent relief forces from meeting unit needs (e.g.: blocked transportation modes).
  - (e) Conduct relief, response, and recovery operations as capability allows.
  - (f) If additional personnel are needed to augment the Unit, submit a request to the IAC through the Eighth District Command Center (504) 589-6225.
  - (g) Document personnel incapacitated through personal or family injuries or a loss of housing. Provide the IAC with a list of any personnel who should be replaced in order to maintain operational capability. Report any personnel replaced by Reserve or Auxiliary personnel.
  - (h) Provide Coast Guard representation to the local and State EOC's as appropriate for coordination.
  - (i) Use unit funds for expenditures other than for pollution response (OSLTF/CERCLA) with authority to exceed the operating targets when authorized by Eighth District. Document all expenditures with adequate justification for reimbursement.
  - (j) Maintain Area of Responsibility (AOR) Task Force Books. The AOR Task Force books contains the following:
    1. Summary of Task Force Assignments.
    2. Facility Coordinates.

3. Regulated Facility Information and Turn by Turn Directions.
  4. Area Maps for Task Force Responsibility.
  5. List of Hospitals/Care Facilities in Operation Area.
6. Administration and Logistics.
- a. Concept of Support. Inadequate personnel, support, and logistics often limit response and recovery operations. The need for support must be identified by the affected commands and the relief obtained from unaffected units and support commands. Replacement personnel, assets, and operational equipment and supplies from other units will be coordinated from the ICP. The IAC will provide all aspects of logistics support to the unit that is beyond the ICP resources.
  - b. Logistics. Normal administrative and logistics support forces may be interrupted or simply may not be ready for the pace and volume of required logistical needs. Normal transportation and communications systems may be interrupted.
    - (1) The IAC will augment with appropriate personnel for administrative and logistic support.
    - (2) MLCLANT will organize mobile Emergency Response Teams (ERT's) to assist in logistics as described below.
      - (a) Primary responsibility is to restore affected units operational capability.
      - (b) Determine the extent of damage to Coast Guard installations and units. Establish operational priorities for repair. Coordinate with the ISC and the servicing CEU.
      - (c) Assist affected units to regain their operational capabilities.
      - (d) It is the responsibility of the providing command to ensure that any assistance team sent into the disaster area is self-supporting.
  - c. Personnel. After a major disaster, a number of personnel may be incapacitated through injuries to self, family or destruction of homes. The first source of personnel relief should come from unaffected personnel already attached and qualified to assist the impacted command. ICP will request personnel needs and required skills from the IAC Planning Section. Reservists and Auxiliarists can be follow-on resources to backfill for deployed active duty personnel.
  - d. Communications. For a list of communication capabilities, see enclosure (6).

- e. Public Affairs. The ICP will direct all Public Affairs questions to the Information Officer. Eighth District Public Affairs personnel may be pre-positioned to assist the ICP.
7. Command and Control.
- a. Incident Command Post.
    - (1) The Incident Command Post (ICP) will be located at Marine Safety Office Mobile whenever conditions permit. See enclosure (7) for phone extensions and ICP layout.
    - (2) In the event of a Unified Command with Group Mobile, the ICP established at Base Mobile and MSO Mobile will integrate into their operations. The COTP staff will remain at MSO Mobile as listed in enclosure (7).
    - (3) In the event of an evacuation, the ICP will be located at the Gulf Strike Team. See enclosure (7) for phone extensions and ICP layout.
  - b. NIIMS ICS Facilitator. If available, a facilitator will be designated to coordinate the NIIMS ICS organization within the ICP to ensure proper ICS procedures are followed. The facilitator will act independently of the ICS organization and will be given authority to intercede at any level to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of the command structure. This facilitator will be requested from the Coast Guard National Strike Force.
  - c. Command Staff. The Command Staff will be comprised of the following:
    - (1) Safety Officer. The Safety & Occupational Health Officer from Marine Safety Office Mobile will normally staff this position and work from the ICP.
    - (2) Information Officer. The Eighth District Public Affairs Officer may fill this position.
    - (3) Liaison Officer. The Chief of Port Operations will normally serve as the Liaison Officer. The Liaison function will be split into separate staffs:
      - (a) Captain of the Port (COTP) Staff. This staff will serve strictly to act as a conduit of information between the COTP and the port communities. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will detail a representative to this staff, and one petty officer will be detailed to assist the ATON Branch and to provide information back to the COTP staff. This staff is responsible for:
        - 1. Coordinating Port Emergency Action Team (PEAT) Liaisons (see enclosure (8));

2. Draft all COTP regulatory correspondence, including COTP orders, safety zones, security zones, etc.; and
  3. All external communications regarding the status of the ports and waterways and response activities, to include the MSO Mobile web site, MSIB's, BNTM's, and the Voice Mail Announcement System.
- (b) Group Operations Center Liaison. MSO Mobile will provide three liaisons to the Group Operations Center (GOC) located at Base Mobile. These personnel will work on a rotating basis to ensure the position will be staffed 24 hours a day, beginning when the National Weather Service issues a Hurricane Watch. The GOC Liaisons are responsible for:
1. Assisting the GOC with non-SAR-related phone calls;
  2. Reporting Marine Safety related issues to the CDO prior to storm landfall; and
  3. Reporting Marine Safety related issues into the ICP after storm landfall (use enclosure (7) to ensure information is directed to the appropriate location).
- (c) Emergency Operation Center (EOC) Liaison(s). Coast Guard Reserve and Auxiliary personnel will be utilized to fill these positions. EOC Liaisons will be provided with specific instructions as to how they should interface with the EOC and how to contact the ICP. See enclosure (9). EOC liaisons are responsible for:
1. Representing the Coast Guard to County and State EOC's when the National Weather Service issues a Hurricane Watch;
  2. Relaying information from the EOC to the Coast Guard; and
  3. Serving as a means for the Coast Guard to interface with Federal, State, and local authorities represented at the EOC's.
- d. General Staff.
- (1) Operations Section. (IC/UC) The Assistant Chief of Port Operations will normally serve as the Operations Section Chief. If Unified Command operations are in effect, the Operations Section Chief will be designated by the UC. Each branch within the Operations Section can function independently of the other and be located in separate areas within the ICP. The SAR, ATON, and Air Operations Branches shall be filled as needed **in the event of a Unified Command operation with Group Mobile**. The Operations Section will be comprised of the following branches:

- (a) Marine Environmental Protection (MEP) Branch. (IC/UC) The primary function of the MEP branch will be to conduct pollution assessments and response. MEP resources will deploy from a staging area as outlined in enclosure (1). The MEP branch will normally operate from MSO Mobile. In the event of a Unified Command, the branch will move to the location of the Operations Section.
  - (b) SAR Branch. (UC) In the event of Unified Command operations with Group Mobile, Group Mobile Operations will staff this branch. The primary function of the SAR Branch will be to coordinate hurricane-related Search and Rescue operations. The SAR Branch will normally operate from the GOC.
  - (c) ATON Branch. (UC) In the event of Unified Command operations with Group Mobile, Group Mobile ATON will staff this branch. During **any** hurricane response, the COTP staff will provide a liaison to assist with ATON operations and to provide direct access for the Liaison Officer. The primary function of the ATON Branch will be to survey and replace missing/damaged aids to navigation after storm passage. The ATON Branch will normally operate from Base Mobile.
  - (d) Air Operations Branch. (UC) In the event of Unified Command operations with Group Mobile, ATC Mobile will staff this branch. Under normal circumstances, ATC Mobile will detail a liaison to the GOC; MSO Mobile will access air support through the GOC liaison. The primary function of the Air Operations Branch will be to obtain air assets from the Eighth District Command Center. The branch will draft flight schedules and advise the ICP on aircraft-specific capabilities. The Air Operations Branch will normally operate from the GOC.
- (2) Planning Section. (IC/UC) The Planning Section is responsible for producing a 24-hour Operational Period Incident Action Plan (IAP) for ICP approval by 1830 daily after storm passage (see enclosure (10)). The Planning Section will be comprised of the following units as needed:
- (a) Resource Unit. (IC/UC) The Resource Unit is responsible for maintaining the status of all Coast Guard resources assigned to the hurricane response. For a more detailed description, see reference (b).
  - (b) Situation Unit. (IC/UC) The Situation Unit is responsible for the collection and evaluation of information about the current and possible status of the hurricane and hurricane response operations. This unit will be responsible for drafting the SITREP to the Eighth District by 1900 daily. For a more detailed job description, see reference (b).

- (c) Documentation Unit. (IC/UC) The Documentation Unit is responsible for the maintenance of accurate, up to date incident files. For a more detailed description, see reference (b).
- (3) Logistics Section. (IC/UC) The Logistics Section is responsible for the service and support to the IC throughout hurricane response. Extra logistical support, if needed, will be requested of the Coast Guard Gulf Strike Team (GST). **To reach the GST contact (334) 441-6601/5914.** Medical assistance for Coast Guard personnel, if needed, will be requested of Group Mobile Medical and/or ATC Mobile medical. For a more detailed description, see reference (b).
  - (a) CG Personnel Assistance Unit. (IC/UC) A unit will be established to provide assistance to Coast Guard personnel who have been removed from response operations due to excessive personal property damage. This unit will distribute generators, remove debris, etc. to enable personnel to return to operations.
  - (b) Food Unit. (IC/UC) The Food Unit is responsible for ensuring ICP personnel have adequate opportunity to receive meals if adequate dining facilities are not available. For a more detailed description, see reference (b).
- (4) Finance Section. The Finance Section is primarily responsible for documenting hurricane-related expenditures. Extra support, if needed, will be requested of the Coast Guard Gulf Strike Team and/or the National Pollution Funds Center (NPFC). **To reach the GST, contact (334) 441-6601/5914. To reach the NPFC, contact (703) 235-4778.** For a more detailed job description, see reference (b).

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