

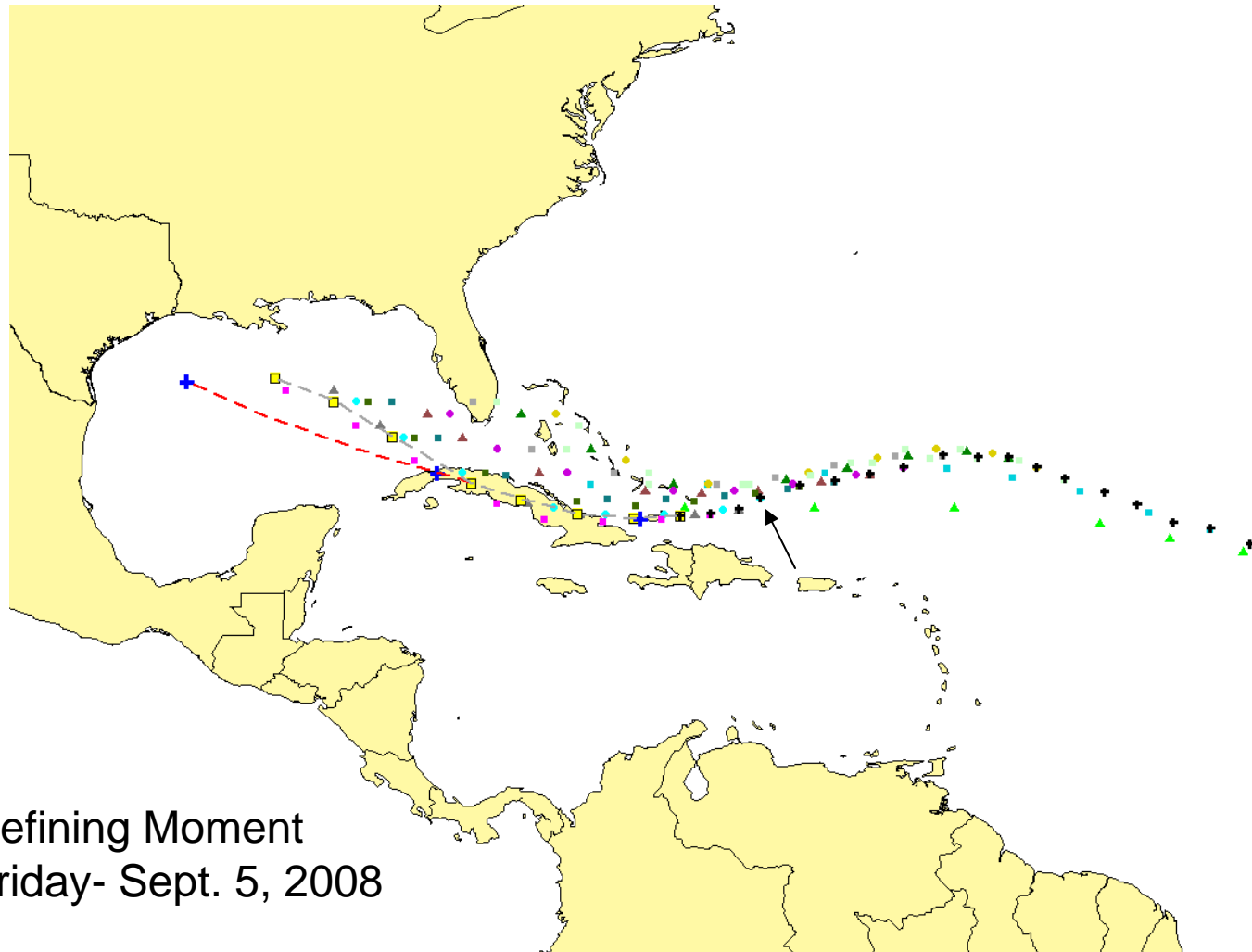


Harris County

Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

Planning *for* The Storm

SSPEED – Gulf Coast Conference
December 11, 2008
Rice University



Defining Moment
Friday- Sept. 5, 2008

Planning

- ▶ Harris County and the surrounding areas began planning for the next incident on August 18, 1983.
 - All-hazards planning
 - Yesterday
 - Today
 - Tomorrow
 - Looking Back at Hurricane Season 2008
 - Planning, Planning, Planning

Timing is Everything!



How much Planning is enough?

- ▶ Dolly
 - July 2008
- ▶ Strengths
 - NIMS / ICS
 - JIC
 - Deployed a Harris County IMT member
- ▶ Improvement
 - Implementation of other agency personnel

EOC Representation: 19 different Agency with 50 participants

Timing is Everything!



How much Planning is enough?

- ▶ Edouard
 - August 2008
- ▶ Strengths
 - NIMS / ICS
 - JIC
 - Use of TxDot HurrCams for monitoring traffic evacuation
 - Developed Demobilization Plan
 - Began refining the POD Plan

Timing is Everything!



How much Planning is enough?

- ▶ Edouard
 - August 2008
- ▶ Strengths
 - Special needs population
- ▶ Improvement
 - Continue implementation of other agency personnel

EOC Representation: 31 different Agency with 140 participants

Timing is Everything!



How much Planning is enough?

- ▶ Gustav
 - August – September, 2008
- ▶ Strengths
 - NIMS / ICS
 - JIC
 - Utilization of Liaison
 - Development of “Frequently asked questions” for phone bank
 - Further developed POD Plan
 - Developed a Repatriation Plan

Timing is Everything!



How much Planning is enough?

- ▶ Gustav
 - August – September, 2008
- ▶ Strengths
 - Refined the Shelter Plan
 - Refined the transportation HUB Plan
- ▶ Improvement
 - Further training on WebEOC

EOC Representation: 18 different Agency with 80 participants

Timing is Everything!



Game Day

- ▶ Hurricane Ike
 - September 2008
- ▶ Strengths
 - NIMS/ICS
 - Sections closely planned together
 - Sections closely worked together
 - JIC
 - Right agencies represented at the EOC
 - POD Plan
 - Regional Communication Plan

Timing is Everything!



Game Day

- ▶ Hurricane Ike
 - September 2008
- ▶ Strengths
 - Communications
 - Internal and External
 - Validation of our Planning/Plans
 - Neighbors helping Neighbors
 - Stayed focused
 - Stayed task-oriented
 - Search & Rescue capability

Timing is Everything!



Game Day

- ▶ Hurricane Ike
 - September 2008
 - ▶ Strengths
 - Special needs evacuations
 - ▶ Improvement
 - WebEOC went down
 - Federal, state and local coordination
 - Ownership of tasks delayed progress
- EOC Representation: 50 different Agency with over 400 participants

Timing is Everything!



Rita vs. Ike – Evacuation

- ▶ Because of a persistent educational campaign, people who lived outside the surge zones largely stayed home. As a result, roads were less clogged for coastal residents, and a new public–private partnership ensured the availability of fuel along the way.
 - Run from the water, hide from the wind
 - Consistent message
 - Realistic plans

Timing is Everything!



Rita vs. Ike – Evacuation

- ▶ Gas no problem for most
 - Gasoline availability, another major problem along highways leading from Houston in 2005, wasn't a significant issue among Ike evacuees.
 - The Plan
- ▶ People more savvy
 - Houston–area residents have become more educated about hurricane preparation since Rita.
 - They had a Plan

Timing is Everything!



Rita vs. Ike – Evacuation

- ▶ “As I evacuated, I kept seeing evidence of governmental planning — a fleet of ambulances heading in, fuel trucks and an emergency rest stop with porta-johns, first aid and guys with orange vests,” wrote a Clear Lake resident. “I’m so glad (and surprised) to see that our elected officials actually developed a plan to avoid another disaster like Rita!”

Timing is Everything!



Lessons Learned

- ▶ You cannot prevent or anticipate all disasters, so you should prepare and practice for them. Knowing where to go and what critical functions need to be restored can provide confidence to you and your employees when responding to a disaster.

Timing is Everything!



Lessons Learned

- ▶ Partnerships with Businesses, Government and Industries
 - Industrial Liaison
 - Developed an Industry Essential Personnel Credentialing and Re-entry System (IEPCRS)
 - CMOC
 - Special Needs Population – Communications

Timing is Everything!



What can Businesses do today to prepare for tomorrow?

- ▶ Identify potential threats
- ▶ Assess your potential impacts
- ▶ Assign priorities, and develop planned responses
- ▶ Categorize threats on a scale from high to low, according to their probability of occurring
- ▶ Know the impact to your company

Timing is Everything!



What can Businesses do today to prepare for tomorrow?

- ▶ Continue forward-looking and have generators, fuel, and replenishment stock before the disaster strikes.
- ▶ Don't be afraid to take risks on stock levels. Well before a predictable disaster such as a hurricane, be bold and stockpile as many primary goods as you can.

Timing is Everything!



What can Businesses do today to prepare for tomorrow?

- ▶ Understand your power needs. The power will be off for a long time, and you should be sure that your business has enough emergency power for all its needs.
- ▶ Plan to keep your business running in as close to normal mode as possible.
- ▶ Don't underestimate the power of communication.
 - Keep Web pages up-to-date with useful information.

Timing is Everything!



What can Businesses do today to prepare for tomorrow?

- ▶ What can you do in your communities?
 - Be prepared to assist in the recovery and meet immediate needs of your community.
 - Communicate, Communicate, Communicate

Timing is Everything!



THANK YOU

Harris County Judge Ed Emmett
Director



Timing is Everything!

