

A composite image showing a weather radar map of the Atlantic region. On the left, a map of Florida highlights Miami and Hollywood with a yellow circle containing the number '11'. On the right, a map of the Bahamas shows major towns like Nassau and Nicholls Town. The background is a green and yellow weather radar overlay.

CASE STUDY

Hurricane Dorian - First Major Hurricane of the 2019 Atlantic Hurricane Season

Mutualink Connects Emergency Management Agencies and Enterprise SOC's during Hurricane Dorian

Overview

Hurricane Dorian was the fourth named storm of the 2019 hurricane season, which runs from June 1 through November 30. As Dorian threatened Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and the Bahamas on its trajectory toward Florida, emergency managers swung into action. For many, a focus on communications and technology readiness was top of mind.

Problem

With large hurricanes, emergency managers at the federal, state and local levels coordinate for optimal response. Emergency managers and security directors in private corporations and places of mass gathering also need to collaborate with their public sector counterparts. Each agency brings a unique mix of communication

resources: radios (LMR), cell phones, landline phones, video systems and cameras. Maintaining situational awareness within each organization, as well as between agencies and with the private sector, presents a challenge.

Solution

Mutualink, the premier interoperable communications solution in use with federal, state and local government agencies as well as private enterprise. The platform serves the needs of the emergency management community by enabling instant coordination before, during and after a threatening weather event.

Mutualink offers a secure, flexible and adaptable communications system for federal agencies via the DHS/FEMA Interoperable Gateway System (IGS). State and local public agencies along with private enterprise coordinate on the **Interoperable Response and Preparedness Platform (IRAPP)** network. Mutualink's mission is to provide TRUE interoperability solutions to federal, state, and local partners for seamless real-time communications within, among, and between agencies and with private entities.

CASE STUDY: Hurricane Dorian



FEMA Teams have advocated enhanced collaboration capabilities between all FEMA areas of operation. Any silo approach to emergency response limits the overall coordination and response efforts. The IGS provides a new standard and set of tools for FEMA and other federal partners.

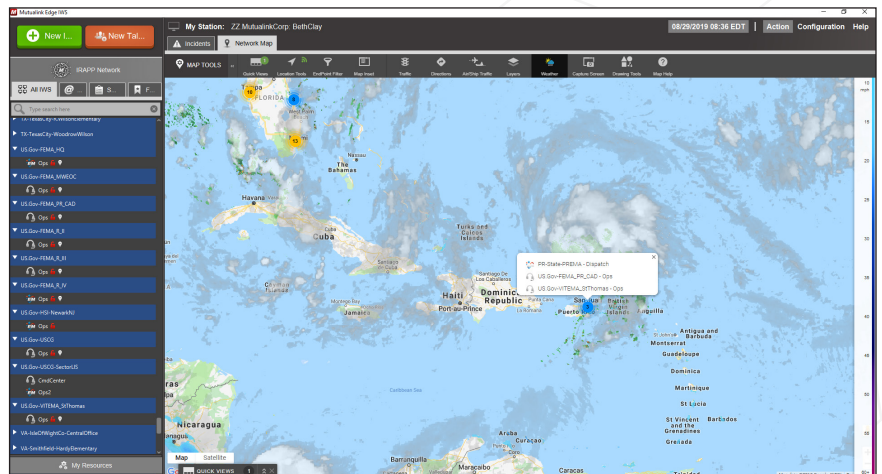
- FEMA Systems Owner

“The use of Mutualink during Hurricane Dorian allowed us to coordinate with our local and regional response agencies (Law Enforcement, Fire Rescue, Hospitals, School District and High Education). We created an incident with Osceola School District to maintain active communication and video connection with all of our emergency shelters at the schools during the incident,” said Bill Litton, Emergency Management Director of Osceola County (FL).

The Results

As Hurricane Dorian approached the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, federal and state emergency management agencies solved the communications problem by setting up collaboration sessions on the Mutualink IWS platform. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) personnel in Washington DC maintained consistent visibility with all FEMA regions. Special attention was taken with Region II, focusing on the Caribbean Area Division (CAD) supporting Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands, along with Region IV. All FEMA regions operating IGS equipment remained online with strong communications during the strongest storm conditions.

As needed, FEMA uses an interoperability gateway to bridge region communications with IRAPP to instantly share and collaborate with state and local agencies, as well as corporate citizens. In Region 2, the Puerto Rico Emergency Management Agency (PREMA) coordinated with the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA), as well as with FEMA, using Mutualink’s IWS for situational awareness across agencies.



After devastating northwest Bahamas, Dorian made its way toward Florida and the Eastern Seaboard. In preparation, Corporations with offices along the East Coast readied themselves. One large enterprise with headquarters in the northeast and a major regional hub in northern Florida reached out to private partners and public agencies, using Mutualink to coordinate situational awareness.

Learning from past hurricanes, this Mutualink customer understood that imagery and first-hand accounts shared over the IWS platform will provide the best source for information. So federal, state and local agencies joined this enterprise Security Operations Center (SOC) in a Mutualink incident. Over a three-day period, they shared video, traffic camera feeds, text messages and official documents, as well as radio and cell phone communications, all securely bridged in real time on Mutualink's platform.



VOICE

Connects incompatible radio systems, PTT apps, mobile phone and landline phones.



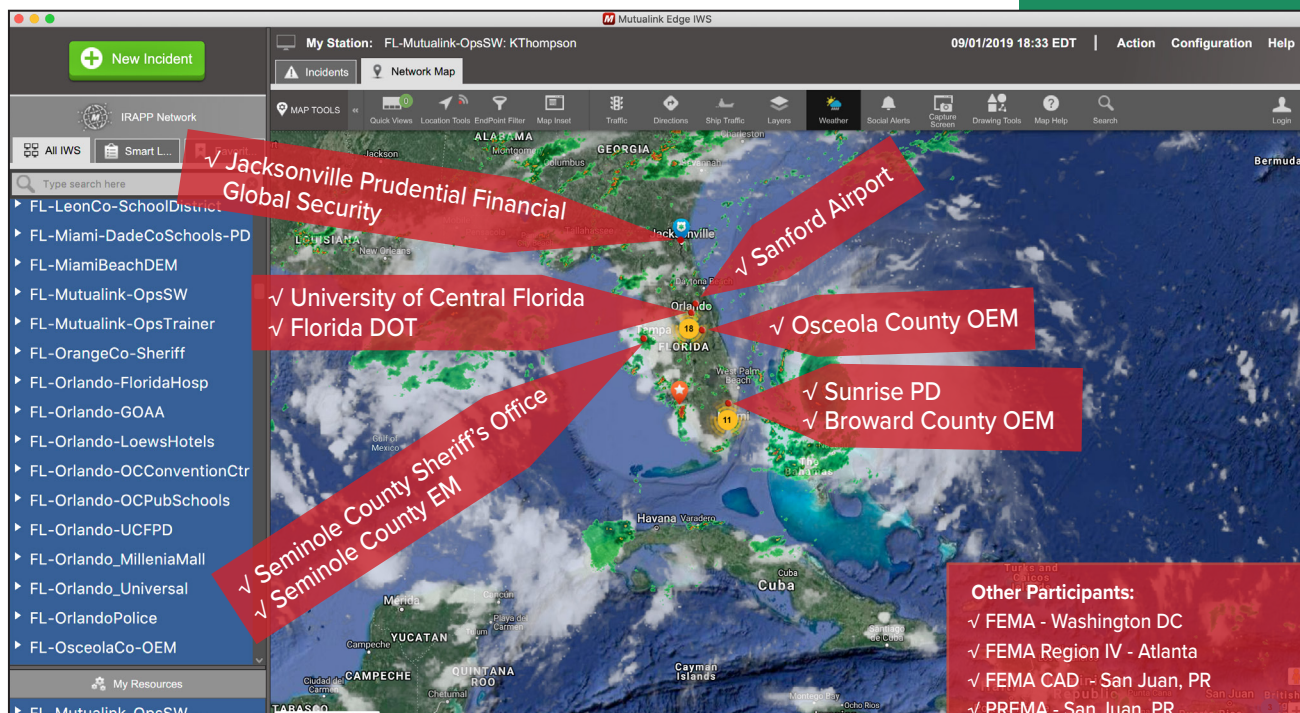
VIDEO

Shares video streams in real time.



DATA

Shares floor plans and other critical situational information.



“The better prepared we are in advance, the better our response will be if and when the storm hits, My team and I keep the 80 thousand students, faculty and staff of UCF safe during these weather events by tracking and preparing for the storm. A big part of that is connecting with our county partners to monitor conditions.”

- said Joe Thalheimer, Manager of Emergency Management at the University of Central Florida

For more information on any of our products or services please contact us:

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