



# FEMORS NewsGram

## Vol. 11, No. 1

### Summer 2013



#### Past-Commander's Farewell Message



In the last NewsGram I wrote: *"Perhaps a chief development this past year was the announcement of my impending retirement in January, 2013 and the passing of the reins to Jason Byrd."*

Like many things in life, sometimes plans are altered by factors beyond our control. That original 2013 target date slipped to 2014, February to be more precise.

This time, *I promise*, I am stepping back to a supporting role as Jason leads us forward. For those of you who were not able to join us for the June Drill, you need to know that as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, Jason Byrd is now the Commander and I have assumed his former role of Logistics Chief. During my last 6 months or so I will be working with the DPMU Team to reorganize the cache (a result of the alert for Oklahoma).

Once I officially retire under the Florida Retirement System's DROP plan, I have a 1 year window during which I cannot receive compensation from any agency the pays into the State Retirement System. That means I cannot be deployed to an incident with FEMORS between February 2014 and 2015. I can still come out to play for training but cannot be deployed. Oh well!

This spring we accomplished a number of milestones by:

- Helping to finalize the "Typing" of fatality management teams and the credentialing of job titles for State teams (at least until the feds decide to start up once again!);
- Producing the 6<sup>th</sup> Edition of the FEMORS FOG;
- Training members for VIC-MIC, Odont and a full blown Annual (Drill); and,
- Activating (almost!) for the Oklahoma tornados.

May our future stay as bright as our past,  
*Larry*

#### CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Effective July 1, 2013, Jason H. Byrd, Ph.D., D-ABFE became the Commander of FEMORS.



In addition to serving as the June drill's Branch Director (Commander), the multi-talented and versatile Jason has been serving FEMORS since a time even before it was founded. In those very early formative days of late 2001 and early 2002, Jason was among the original forensic advisors Dr. Goldberger consulted to initiate the "mass fatality team" program that eventually became FEMORS.

Not only was he one of the Charter Members when FEMORS was inaugurated in July 2002, he was among the original members of the DPMU Team formed in 2005 when the *glamorous* work was performed out of the 1<sup>st</sup> non-climate controlled warehouse. He became the Logistics Chief in 2008 and now takes on the mantle of leadership as FEMORS Commander.

Jason also serves as an Administrative Officer for DMORT Region IV and responded to Hurricane Katrina (2005) and the Haiti Earthquakes (2010).



His latest endeavors include guiding the development of the ground breaking ASPCA Veterinary Forensic Sciences Graduate Certificate program at UF.



For a more complete biographical sketch visit:

<http://www.forensicscience.ufl.edu/veterinary/vetforensicsfaculty>

FEMORS is fortunate to have Jason at the helm for the next era of growth and to have such a powerful team to support him in meeting Florida's needs.

**DEPT. OF HEALTH BUDGET REDUCTION**

The Department of Health uses an extensive process to review and decide upon all local and state response projects each year. Knowing that DOH had faced severe legislatively created funding cutbacks, FEMORS took the initiative to trim its recurring request for operating funds for the upcoming year. The request for FY 13-14 was for \$300,000, a decrease of \$50,000 or 14%.

In March, DOH held its annual grant funding conferences and applied an across the board reduction of 10% to all projects. That meant that the \$300,000 request was further trimmed to \$270,000 (or a total of 23% below the prior year).

Just how the loss of an additional \$30,000 will be mitigated is not yet clear but it might impact training sessions and other elements as the details get worked out.

**VIC/MIC TEAM TRAINING 2013**

The Tenth Annual Training for the Victim Information Center (VIC) Team together with several Morgue Identification Center (MIC) members was held Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup>.

This was the 2<sup>nd</sup> year for VIC and MIC to train together as a key recommendation from the 2011 Drill evaluations.



VIC-MIC 2013 Training Participants

Forty-Six (46) members, including several brand new folks, participated in hands-on practice with the interview process and data entry into the VIP database program. Several of FEMORS' Odontologists also took part to enhance their learning of VIP's capability to conduct searches of potential matching data from sources other than dental records.

As in years past, this was again staged at the SLRC warehouse because that is where the computer network equipment can be fully set up to take advantage of improved IT infrastructure built up by DOH specialists assigned to complement FEMORS resources.

**ODONTOLOGY TEAM TRAINING 2013**

The Ninth Annual Odontology Training was held the following day on Saturday, March 16<sup>th</sup> with twenty-seven (27) Odontologists and dental assistants attending. This was also staged at the SLRC warehouse where the dental equipment and computer network equipment was set up.



Odont Team 2013 Training Participants

Drs. Lipton and Kurtz (*FEMORS' very own "Tooth Barry's"*) had most of the dental equipment running smoothly to make this one of the best sessions yet. Heavy discussion also took place regarding incorporating dental comparison into VIP and simplifying the process. That is among the Summer projects for Logistics Programmer Greg Klimetz to tackle in his *free* time.

**ANNUAL TRAINING 2013 TOHO NoNo FLOOD**

The Eleventh Annual Training session (a full blown functional drill) was held Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at the SLRC once again. The scenario involved a tornado (Oklahoma anyone?), a damaged flood gate at Lake Toho, and a flood (Tropical Storm Andrea anyone?) of the RV parking area.



FEMORS 11<sup>th</sup> Annual 2013 Training Participants

A complete After Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) will be forthcoming but in general this year's drill was very effective in testing almost every element of fatality management processing.

FEMORS was again assisted by a team of DMORT Evaluators and a team of Behavioral Health "actors".



Tropical Storm Andrea forced the "Recovery" team to practice inside the SLRC



DPMU (the Elves behind the scenes!)



Morgue operations inside the SLRC



DMORT Evaluators: Ronnie Freels, Pete Burke, Richard Stallings and Cotton Howell (not shown)



VIC Records Management nerve center



Behavioral Health Team served as "Actors"



MIC Odontologists

Numerous, thoughtful evaluations were provided by the players, actors and Evaluators. All of that input will be incorporated into the AAR/IP and distributed to the members.

Those sneaky "drill designers"



### 2014 TRAINING PROGRAMS (PENDING FUNDING)

Registration forms for the 2014 programs will again be coming out after the New Year. All members will receive notice and instructions for the on-line registration process.

**Note Well:** the prerequisites for **registering** for FEMORS training continue to be both the:

1. basic 4 NIMS courses, and
2. completed application package.

Following the 2013 Annual Training program, 26 members were moved from Active to Inactive status because they had not attended any fatality management training in over two years. FEMORS' roster was thus reduced to 164 Active members.

All Inactive members are strongly encouraged to complete the prerequisites early so that they may register to attend and regain Active status with any of the 2014 training sessions.

Feedback from this year's sessions again emphasized the value of face time with each other as critical to building team cohesiveness. Having only one opportunity each year to train together is still a commodity too precious to be squandered.

### VIC-MIC TRAINING 2014- SAVE THE DATE

The Eleventh Annual Victim Information Center (VIC) and Morgue Identification Center (MIC) Training will be held **Friday, March 14<sup>th</sup>**. The host hotel may change but it will still be in the area of International Drive.

Tentatively, hands-on training sessions will take place at the SLRC where all the computer network equipment can be set up.

Members interested in joining the VIC or MIC Team are welcome to participate. Both procedure refresher training and practical hands-on use of the computer systems focused on the Victim Identification Program (VIP) will be among the major goals as a refresher session.

### ODONT TRAINING 2014- SAVE THE DATE

The Tenth annual Odontology Training will be held **Saturday, March 15<sup>th</sup>**. The host hotel may change but it will still be in the area of International Drive.

Tentatively, hands-on training sessions will take place at the SLRC where all the dental and computer network equipment can be set up.

This session is open to all Odontologists and dental assistants. Hopefully, new VIP sections for simplified, NCIC based dental data will be ready for testing at that time.

### ANNUAL TRAINING 2014 - SAVE THE DATE

The Twelfth Annual Training session will be held **Thursday, June 5<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, June 7<sup>th</sup>**. The venues and agendas will be decided later. This is the even-year part of the training cycle so lessons learned from the 2013 drill can become important for developing the agenda.

### "TYPING" OF FATALITY MANAGEMENT TEAMS

AKA: "The Never-ending Story".

#### Background:

In 2012, the NewsGram reported:

*"A final draft of typing for FM teams had to be submitted by Nov 30, 2011."*

and:

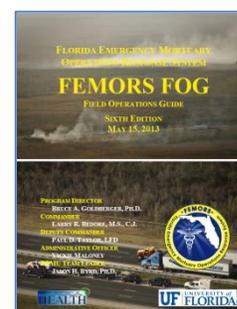
*"The evolution of defining what constitutes FM teams continued during 2011 and 2012. So, apparently that Nov 30<sup>th</sup> draft was not so final after all."*

Additional tweaking of language continued up through March 23, 2013, especially when FEMA tried to impose a "throughput" number for use of a DPMU Team and sought comment. The appropriate response was provided as:

**DPMU: NO throughput on its own.**

**Full FM Type I Team: YES, it does have a throughput. A full Type I response with 99 personnel plus the DPMU can fully process approximately 20 bodies per 12-hour operational period. (This does NOT mean they are "identified" this means FM Morgue staff "processed" the bodies to gather the post mortem information necessary to make identifications later.)**

Those additional NIMS refinements, along with other new VIP tutorial sections, were finally incorporated into the [FEMORS FOG 6th Edition](#) and sent to the printers in time for use at the June Annual Training session drill.



Then, on March 25<sup>th</sup>, just two days *after* the 6<sup>th</sup> Edition of the FOG was finalized, certain elements of the Law Enforcement response community attempted to move the function of Fatality Management out of the Operation Section and into the Intelligence and Investigation (I/I) Section. Fortunately input from forensic community advocates (IACME and NAME) appears to have halted that effort.

Only time will tell what shape the next iteration will look like!

**FEMORS INTERACTIONS**

**OPERATION RADAR 2013**

The week of February 4 – 8, 2013, the Florida Division of Emergency Management and Florida National Guard hosted “Interoperable Communications Summit 2013, Operation Radar”, at Camp Blanding, Florida.

This was the second test since 2010 of a wide range of communication systems developed since 911 and include:

- The Florida Interoperability Network (FIN),
- Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS),
- Emergency Deployable Interoperable Communications (EDICS),
- Emergency Deployable, Wide Area Remote Data Systems (EDWARDS) and trailers,
- Mutual Aid Radio Communications (MARC),
- Transportable Radio Interconnect Systems (TRP-1000) and trailers,
- Mutual aid radios for 108 mobile command vehicles,
- County based portable switching systems, and
- State and county based portable repeaters and radio caches (including the FEMORS Command Trailer system).



Jason Byrd and Mike Goodman represented FEMORS. Jason reported later: “We successfully tested the radio system and resolved several injects that required FEMORS to serve as the point of communication for other agencies without HF radio capacity.”

Unfortunately, during the transportation of the trailer to Camp Blanding one tire blew out while Mike Goodman was driving. Then, on the return trip two more blew out. Fortunately, Mike was able to maintain control and injury and damage were averted.



Needless to say, all tires have now been replaced!

**OKLAHOMA ALERT LESSONS LEARNED**

Tuesday, May 21<sup>st</sup> was a very busy day for many of the FEMORS team as an all-out alert was issued by DOH to prepare to deploy to assist Oklahoma.

Escalating media reports of the number of dead from the Monday afternoon storms had reached 91 at one point.

**Vast Oklahoma Tornado Kills Dozens**

By NICK OXFORD and MICHAEL SCHWIRTZ  
Published: May 20, 2013 | 318 Comments

MOORE, Okla. — A giant tornado, a mile wide or more, killed at least 91 people, 20 of them children, as it tore across parts of Oklahoma City and its suburbs Monday afternoon, flattening homes, flinging cars through the air and crushing at least two schools.

Although some of the sequence details are still a bit sketchy, it appears that a request was made by Oklahoma authorities asking if any state had a “Type I Fatality Management Team” with a death toll expected to rise.



*(Simultaneously, Florida was conducting its annual full-scale Statewide Hurricane Exercise which had started on Monday and included DOH for ESF-8 assets.)*

By 7:30 am, Greg Klimetz was already deployed and enroute to Oklahoma as part of the DMORT Assessment Team sent in to see if help was going to be needed.

At about 9:30 am on Tuesday, Mike McHargue, DOH’s ESF8 Emergency Coordination Officer for the hurricane exercise phoned Commander Bedore with a “real world” call asking if FEMORS was a Type I Team.

Receiving an affirmative answer, Mike gave the word to assemble a ready list for a team to depart for Oklahoma as soon as arrangements could be made.

DOH would arrange for:

- a Tactical Planner to assist by making transportation and lodging arrangements once a list of responders was prepared , and,
- tractor trailer trucks to transport the cache from Orlando.

9:35 am, FEMORS put out the request for those who would be able to respond to create a Ready List. Simultaneously, Logistics Chief Jason Byrd began coordinating arrangements to prepare the Command Trailer and DPMU cache for transportation to Oklahoma (at best, a trip drive time of 24 hours).

9:48 am, ESF-8 was notified that FEMORS would need five (5) 53' to 56' trailers to be dispatched to the SLRC and that the DPMU logistics team was mobilizing to get to the SLRC to do the loading.

Within the first 2 hours, 55 members were signed up, packing Go Kits and preparing to deploy (eventually that number rose to 76). Numerous members sent regrets that they had prior commitments but could be available later in the week if needed.

By noon the Medical Examiner issued a statement correcting earlier media reports indicating that the death toll stood at only 24.



*(Meanwhile, Greg Klimetz was still enroute for DMORT but stuck in traffic trying to get close enough to meet with the Medical Examiner).*

12:11 pm Commander Bedore sent an e-mail asking ESF-8 if the 53' trucks had been ordered and were enroute to the warehouse because two DPMU members had been dispatched to head over to start strapping down the pallets.

12:19 pm ESF-8 requested an inventory list of the DPMU cache to complete the EMAC paperwork. *(EMAC is the Emergency Management Assistance Compact that Governors use to request assistance from other states).* ESF-8 also requested a cost estimate of team response.

12:27 pm the DPMU cache inventory and a listing of site requirements was provided to ESF-8.

12:30 pm Administrative Chief Vickie Maloney had arranged for expanded spending authority for key UF staff (should the need arise).

12:50 pm ESF-8 called Commander Bedore to advise mission had been aborted, Team can stand-down.

1:17 pm Notice of the stand-down was sent out to members.

By 4:30 pm that afternoon, the cost estimate was completed assuming a 1 week deployment and sent to ESF-8 for future reference. A summary of the detail provided includes:

Cost workup of the full 99-member team for a week.

Personnel bottom line:

Payroll	\$328,442
Air Travel	\$ 59,400
Lodging	\$ 59,400
Per diem	\$ 85,536
Total	\$532,778

Added to this would be costs for:

- 5 trailers and drivers for moving them to the incident (and eventual return)
  - Per diem for the drivers?
    - At least one would have to remain on site to move trailers as needed
  - If reefers are used, one full time maintenance staffer would be needed to keep the units going.
    - Fuel service
- Wrap-around services at the site
  - Power
  - Water
  - Phone and Internet
  - Waste services
  - Fork-lift rental
- Post incident cache rehab: ~\$9,000 for
  - 5 days travel, per diem and labor time for 4 logistics folks for
  - cleaning and decon of equipment
  - reinventory
  - replenishment back to pre-deployment condition

The lessons learned from this intense 4 hour process were valuable:

- FEMORS can rapidly develop a robust Ready List.
- The cache needs to be "ready to load" at all times.
  - All smaller containers should be stored in the large tri-wall stackable units to eliminate the need to strap boxes to pallets.
- Arranging air travel for a deployment will require some capability to purchase tickets for members who do not have the means to afford to immediately pay out of pocket and wait for reimbursement later.
- The excitement of the team members was palpable!

**COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS**

Member feedback and suggestions are always welcome and can be delivered to FEMORS staff via any of the following contact methods:

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**SMILE FOR THE DAY!**



**MY TRAVEL PLANS FOR RETIREMENT**

*(I thought Andy Rooney had once used this on 60 minutes. I tried Googling to find the original source. All I found is that dozens of bloggers are perfectly willing to take credit for this creative little bit of word play. There are several variations out there, but no one I found cited an original author.)*



I have been in many places, but I've never been in Cahoots. Apparently, you can't go alone. You have to be in Cahoots with someone.

I've also never been in Cognito. I hear no one recognizes you there.

I have, however, been in Sane. They don't have an airport; you have to be driven there. I have made several trips there, thanks to my children, friends, family and work.

I would like to go to Conclusions, but you have to jump, and I'm not too much on physical activity anymore.

I have also been in Doubt. That is a sad place to go, and I try not to visit there too often.

I've been in Flexible, but only when it was very important to stand firm.

Sometimes I'm in Capable, and I go there more often as I'm getting older.

One of my favorite places to be is in Suspense! It really gets the adrenalin flowing and pumps up the old heart! At my age I need all the stimuli I can get!

I may have been in Continent, and I don't remember what country I was in. It's an age thing. They tell me it is very wet and damp there.