

Release

from the National Medical Disaster System and the SC Forestry Commission



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Multi-agency exercise readies Midlands for worst-case scenario

Mock disaster at CAE tested emergency preparedness, coordination and response

COLUMBIA—Nearly 400 personnel from local, state and federal agencies and regional hospitals participated in a large-scale mock disaster drill today at Columbia Metropolitan Airport designed to challenge and improve their response capabilities.

The drill focused on coordination between the National Disaster Medical System's Federal Coordination Center and local first responders and hospitals in response to an unspecified catastrophe striking a distant location.

The NDMS Federal Coordination Center, assisted by the South Carolina Forestry Commission's Type II Incident Management Team, led the exercise, which simulated the reception, triage and tracking of non-critical patients evacuated from hospitals near the site of a disaster. The drill included the arrival of a C-17 military transport airplane with volunteer patient-actors that were redistributed to area hospitals.

The National Disaster Medical System coordinates emergency transportation and medical aid during large-scale events such as natural disasters, major transportation accidents, technological catastrophes and acts of domestic terrorism that would otherwise overwhelm the capabilities of emergency responders and medical providers in local jurisdictions.

SC Forestry Commission's Incident Management Team is a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Type II team capable of deploying anywhere in the United States to assist with the management of the Incident Command System. The team is made up of subject matter experts for the management of large-scale emergencies and disasters.

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SCFC's Incident Management Team works regularly with various organizations on training events and real-world disasters, helping them to apply the principles of the Incident Command System framework. ICS is now widely adopted as the most effective organizational structure for both emergency situations and planned events.



Patient-actors are unloaded from a C-17 transport during the mock disaster drill. While the casualties are "pretend," responding personnel, inbound flights, medical transport logistics, performance expectations, and security procedures are not. During NDMS exercises, all attempts are made to keep the situation as authentic as possible.