

Alabama Sends Personnel, Resources to Florida in Preparation for Hurricane Matthew Response

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley on Thursday announced that Alabama is sending state personnel and resources to Florida to assist with hurricane response efforts.

Alabama has received numerous requests for assistance from Florida as Hurricane Matthew approaches and intensifies. So far assistance has been requested from the Alabama National Guard, Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) and the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC).

“Our disaster response teams are always ready to act at a moment’s notice during emergency situations” Governor Bentley said. “I am proud of our men and women who put their lives in danger to help others during natural disasters. Alabama stands ready to assist Florida, or any other state that requests our support, as they respond to Hurricane Matthew.”

AEMA will deploy an Emergency Operations Center Augmentation Team to support the Florida Division of Emergency Management at their Emergency Operation Center. Their primary role will be to support their Florida counterparts as they experience an overwhelming need to coordinate their state response efforts.

“When Alabama is not impacted we always stand ready to support other states in need of assistance,” AEMA Director Art Faulkner said. “We always remember the assistance that has been provided to our state following catastrophic events and want to return the favor.”

Florida has also requested aviation assets and air crews from the Alabama Army National Guard (ALARNG). ALARNG plans to send four UH-60 Blackhawk and two CH-47 Chinook helicopters and 33 air crew Soldiers to assist with lift capabilities transporting personnel and supplies as needed. These Soldiers will be activated under State Active Duty beginning Friday and arrive in Florida Saturday.

ADPH will deploy two Medical Needs Shelter Teams and a Public Health Nurse Strike Team to assist with medical needs in the areas hit by the hurricane in Florida. They will stand up medical care shelters and medical strike teams to provide for the impacted residents in the area. The teams are scheduled to arrive at the staging area in Tallahassee on Saturday afternoon.

Since its enactment by Congress in 1996, largely as a response to the devastation of Hurricane Andrew in 1992, EMAC functions as a mutual aid partnership between states that allows for state-to-state support during disasters. Requests for assistance are sent to other states during catastrophic events or when another state has specialized personnel or equipment needed to respond to an emergency situation. Services rendered by the state sending aid are reimbursed by the state requesting assistance.

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