



CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (CFE-DM) CASE STUDY SERIES

Case Study No. 9 • An Introduction to Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA): A look at recent DSCA operations in support of disaster relief in U.S. Territories in the Indo-Pacific • March 1, 2021

Abstract

In the Indo-Pacific region, the majority of the Department of Defense's (DOD) role in disaster relief has gone towards supporting the United States Government's (USG) foreign disaster relief (FDR) operations. However, while the majority of disaster events in the region occur on foreign soil, a smaller, but significant portion of natural disasters affect U.S. territories in the Pacific. When disasters occur on U.S. soil, and when needed and requested, the DOD can provide Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the lead U.S. agency responsible for disaster relief within the U.S. and its territories. This case study provides an introduction to DSCA and discussion of DSCA operations for some select disasters in the Pacific, looking at recent natural disaster events in the region affecting the U.S. territories of American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), and Guam.

Introduction

When natural disasters affect U.S. territories, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) can play a key role in supporting the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the lead federal agency for domestic disaster response, when called upon to support relief operations. DOD support for disaster relief operations on U.S. soil is referred to as Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) (sometimes also called Defense Support *to* Civil Authorities). The DOD has long provided support to civil authorities, particularly in response to disasters.

In recent years, for territories outside of the Indo-Pacific, the DOD assisted with disaster relief operations in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) after Hurricanes Irma and then Maria, hit in September 2017. DOD involvement can often be quite involving, depending upon the scale of the disaster and assistance required. This was seen in Puerto Rico, when more than 11,000 DOD personnel assisted with relief efforts after Maria devastated the Caribbean island territory.¹ Additionally, around 4,600 service members supported relief operations in both Puerto Rico and USVI when Hurricane Irma struck earlier that same month.²

In the Indo-Pacific region, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) and the DOD play a key role in supporting U.S. agencies responding to disasters in foreign countries and disasters affecting U.S. Pacific territories. When a disaster occurs on foreign soil in the region, the DOD can play a supporting role if asked by the lead agency for foreign disaster response—the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) (or, USAID/BHA)—particularly when the emergency exceeds civilian capacity or when unique assets of the DOD are requested or needed to effectively respond to the disaster. When natural disasters affect U.S. territories in the region, FEMA is the U.S. lead for U.S. Government (USG) response and can and has asked the DOD to provide support when needed.

The majority of major disaster responses conducted by the Department of Defense in the Indo-Pacific region have been relief efforts on foreign soil, referred to as foreign disaster relief (FDR). There have been at least 37 DOD supported significant FDR responses since 1990 in the region, with responses

¹ Over 11,000 DoD Personnel Aid Puerto Rico Hurricane Relief Efforts, <https://www.jcs.mil/Media/News/News-Display/Article/1335933/over-11000-dod-personnel-aid-puerto-rico-hurricane-relief-efforts/>

² DOD continues coordinated Hurricane Irma response efforts, https://www.army.mil/article/193702/dod_continues_coordinated_hurricane_irma_response_efforts

focused on major natural disasters, with tropical cyclones, earthquakes and tsunami being the most prevalent.³

However, perhaps lesser known or reported disaster relief missions have been supported in U.S. territories in the Pacific. This includes all three U.S. Pacific territories: American Samoa, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). When necessary the U.S. military provides support to civilian authorities for emergencies within the U.S. or its territories, through DSCA operations.

This case study provides definitions and a brief discussion of DSCA, focusing on disaster relief operations, as well as providing information on the lead coordinating roles of both FEMA for domestic disaster response, and USAID/BHA in providing FDR. This case study also explores recent DSCA relief efforts in the Pacific, which includes American Samoa, Guam and the CNMI, but excluding DSCA operations in the State of Hawaii. Recent DSCA operations include Tropical Cyclone Gita (February 2018), Super Typhoon Yutu (October 2018), Typhoon Mangkhut (September 2018), and Typhoon Soudelor (August 2015). Some of these events, for example, Typhoon Mangkhut, affected more than one territory, while other disasters occurred right on the heels of another, such as when Super Typhoon Yutu affected CNMI just weeks after Mangkhut hit the territory. While most of the recent responses in the Pacific territories have been towards tropical cyclone relief efforts, one exception is the 2009 tsunami, which greatly affected American Samoa and is considered one of the worst disasters in the territory's history.

Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA)

There are several basic definitions of DSCA that are useful as a starting point in understanding the concept: "Defense Support of Civil authorities is the process by which the Department of Defense provides support to FEMA, working with...civil and local officials."⁴ Another describes mission support: "During DSCA operations, the U.S. military provides essential, lifesaving and preserving support to American citizens affected by declared natural disasters."⁵

However, there are several broader definitions that better cover the breadth and scope of Department of Defense support to Civil Authorities operations and activities. One definition can be found in the "Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) Interagency Partner Guide for Disasters and Emergencies, January 2015":

DSCA is support provided by U.S. Federal military forces, DOD civilians, DOD contract personnel, DOD Component assets, and, in coordination with the Governors, Federally funded National Guard forces in response to requests for assistance from civil authorities for domestic emergencies, law enforcement support, and other domestic activities, or from qualifying entities for special events.⁶

Additionally:

When requested, DOD provides essential support to civil authorities in response to a crisis or a natural disaster, or in support of special events when local, Tribal, and State capabilities are overwhelmed, exhausted or unavailable. This support can be made available within the United States, including any territory or possession.⁷

3 USINDOPACOM Foreign Disaster Response in the Indo-Asia-Pacific, June 1991 – June 2019, <https://www.cfe-dmha.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=twmMY081NH8%3d&portalid=0>

4 Wasp Expeditionary Strike Group Begins DSCA Operations in Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1630040/wasp-expeditionary-strike-group-begins-dsca-operations-in-commonwealth-of-the-n/>

5 Commander, Task Force-75 Supports Task Force West in Typhoon Recovery Effort, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1686160/commander-task-force-75-supports-task-force-west-in-typhoon-recovery-effort/>

6 Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) Interagency Partner Guide for Disasters and Emergencies January 2015, <https://policy.defense.gov/Portals/11/Documents/hdasa/DSCAInteragencyPartnerGuide.pdf>

7 Ibid.

Other definitions of DSCA are provided by DOD Directives pertaining to DSCA operations as well as U.S. military doctrine.

DOD Directives (DoDD)

There are two DOD Directives which help to define and direct the DOD's role in DSCA operations. These are: Department of Defense Directive 5111.13, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security (ASD(HD&GS)) (March 23, 2018), and Department of Defense Directive 3025.18, "Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA)," (December 29, 2010, as amended, Incorporating Change 2, March 19, 2018). The two DOD Directives provide the DOD regulatory guidance for DSCA and the definition, overall direction and purview of DSCA activities is laid out in these two DOD Directives.

A DOD Directive "is a broad policy document containing what is required by legislation, the President, or the Secretary of Defense to initiate, govern, or regulate actions or conduct by the DoD Components within their specific areas of responsibilities. DoD Directives establish or describe policy, programs, and organizations; define missions; provide authority; and assign responsibilities..."⁸

DOD Directive 3025.18

DOD Directive 3025.18, "Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA)," December 29, 2010, Incorporating Change 2, March 19, 2018, is the DOD regulation governing DSCA, and establishes policy and assigns responsibilities for DSCA. DOD Directive 3025.18 provides the DOD definition of DSCA and as such, should probably be regarded as one of the authoritative definitions of DSCA.

DSCA. Support provided by U.S. Federal military forces, DoD civilians, DoD contract personnel, DoD Component assets, and National Guard forces (when the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Governors of the affected States, elects and requests to use those forces in title 32, U.S.C., status) in response to requests for assistance from civil authorities for domestic emergencies, law enforcement support, and other domestic activities, or from qualifying entities for special events. Also known as civil support.⁹

This Directive also, "a. Establishes policy and assigns responsibilities for DSCA, also referred to as civil support," and:

d. Provides guidance for the execution and oversight of DSCA when requested by civil authorities or by qualifying entities and approved by the appropriate DoD official, or as directed by the President, within the United States, including the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and any territory or possession of the United States or any political subdivision thereof.¹⁰

DOD Directive 5111.13

Department of Defense Directive 5111.13, "Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security ASD(HD&GS)," (March 23, 2018) assigns the responsibility of oversight of DSCA to the ASD(HD&GS).¹¹

According to the DOD Directive, responsibilities and functions of the ASD(HD&GS) include to "Develop, coordinate, and oversee implementation of DOD policy for DSCA plans and activities..."¹² The office also serves as the focal point for policy matters pertaining to DSCA.

⁸ What are the DoD Issuances?, <https://biotech.law.lsu.edu/blaw/dodd/general.html>

⁹ DoD Directive 3025.18, <https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodd/302518p.pdf>

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ DoD Directive 5111.13, March 23, 2018; Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security (ASD(HD&GS)), <https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodd/511113p.pdf?ver=2018-03-23-075450-197>

¹² Ibid.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security (ASD(HD&GS)) The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security (ASD(HD&GS)) falls under the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. As mentioned above, this is also stated in Department of Defense Directive 5111.13.

The mission of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security is to develop policy guidance; provide astute policy advice; and oversee planning, capability development, and operational implementation to assure warfighting and national security advantages in the mission areas of: Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction; Cyber; Space; Defense Continuity; Mission Assurance; Defense Support of Civil Authorities; and supervises Homeland Defense activities of the Department of Defense.¹³

The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security (ASD(HD&GS)) per DOD Directive 5111.13 as mentioned above, oversees DSCA and coordinates DoD's domestic efforts in support of other Federal Departments and Agencies, States, and local authorities. According to the Directive, the ASD(HD&GS) is the principal civilian policy advisor to the Secretary of Defense and the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)) for assigned areas of responsibility, including Homeland Defense, which includes DSCA.

Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018

DSCA is also defined in U.S. military doctrine, in particular “Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018,” which provides a definition, a comprehensive overview, and “provides joint doctrine to plan, conduct, and assess defense support of civil authorities.”¹⁴

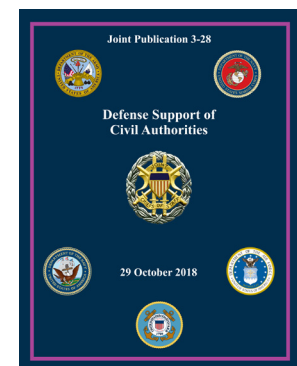
The definition of DSCA provided by JP 3-28 is as follows:

Defense support of civil authorities (DSCA) is support provided by federal military forces; Department of Defense (DOD) civilians; DOD contract personnel; and DOD component assets, to include National Guard (NG) forces (when the Secretary of Defense [SecDef], in coordination with the governors of the affected states, elects and requests to use and fund those forces in Title 32, United States Code [USC], status), in response to a request for assistance (RFA) from civil authorities for domestic emergencies, cyberspace incident response, law enforcement support, and other domestic activities or from qualifying entities for special events. DSCA includes support to prepare, prevent, protect, respond, and recover from domestic incidents. DSCA is provided in response to requests from civil authorities and upon approval from appropriate authorities. DSCA is conducted only in the US homeland.¹⁵

JP 3-28 describes the fundamentals of response; discusses the all hazards scope of defense support of civil authorities; describes the federal role in supporting a comprehensive all hazards response; and, discusses “when and how federal forces may provide support to federal, state, territory, tribal, insular areas, and local law enforcement organizations.”¹⁶

The Joint Publication also discusses planning to support and sustain DSCA “to include personnel services, intelligence support, meteorological support, logistics, public affairs, health services, mortuary affairs, cyberspace support, and other support and sustainment considerations.”¹⁷

JP 3-28 provides a robust and detailed explanation of the DSCA process, key concepts and fundamentals, which goes beyond the scope of this introductory case study. Although some of the basic principles will be briefly discussed, it is recommended for details and further information on DSCA please reference this



¹³ “Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security,” <https://policy.defense.gov/OUSDP-Offices/ASD-for-Homeland-Defense-and-Global-Security/>

¹⁴ Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_28.pdf

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

publication at: https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_28.pdf (as well as other resources referenced throughout this case study) for more and detailed information.

Strategic Guidance

DOD's strategic guidance recognizes DSCA as a primary mission. One of the pillars emphasized by the Defense Strategy is protecting the homeland--deterring and defeating attacks and supporting civil authorities in mitigating the effects of potential attacks and natural disasters.¹⁸

The "Strategy for Homeland Defense and Defense Support of Civil Authorities (February 2013)" says: "Defending U.S. territory and the people of the United States is the highest priority of the Department of Defense (DOD), and providing appropriate defense support of civil authorities (DSCA) is one of the Department's primary missions."¹⁹ Additionally, the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance also designates DSCA as a primary DOD mission. The Unified Command Plan assigns DSCA as a core mission of USNORTHCOM and USINDOPACOM and the Defense Planning Guidance for Fiscal Years 2017-2021 "prioritizes the capabilities, capacities, and readiness of the Joint Force to perform the DSCA mission."²⁰

Key DSCA concepts:

A comprehensive and thorough discussion of DSCA is far beyond the scope and intent of this particular case study. Therefore it is recommended the reader consult key resources such as the JP 3-28 and other sources cited in this document. However, a short summary and outline of some of the key DSCA concepts will be briefly discussed.



Source: ADP 3-28 Defense Support of Civil Authorities, July 2019,
https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/pdf/web/ARN19349_ADPA203-28%20FINAL%20WEB.pdf

¹⁸ Hearing before the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications of the Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives 114th Congress, First Session, June 10, 2015, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-114hhrg95684/html/CHRG-114hhrg95684.htm>

¹⁹ As defined by "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for the 21st Century Defense," January 2012. Strategy for Homeland Defense and Defense Support of Civil Authorities, <https://fas.org/man/eprint/homedefstrat.pdf>

²⁰ Hearing before the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications of the Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives 114th Congress, First Session, June 10, 2015, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-114hhrg95684/html/CHRG-114hhrg95684.htm>

The DOD has multiple assets and ways to provide DSCA to civil authorities after natural disasters or other emergency situations. This includes transportation assets, logistics, medical personnel and supplies, communications equipment, etc.

Initiation of DSCA

There are two ways to initiate defense support of civil authorities: a Request for Assistance (RFA) from civil authorities, or the direct authorization of the President or Secretary of Defense. An RFA from civil authorities will come from the lead federal agency, and in some cases will be validated by a Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO).²¹

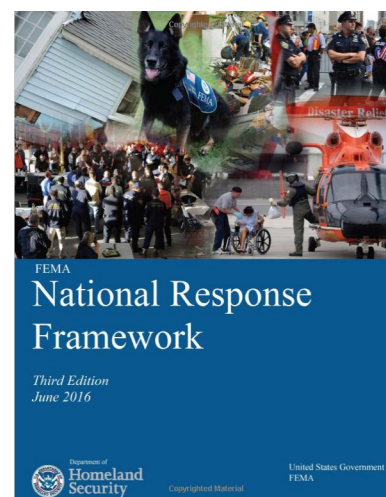
“DSCA is initiated by a request for DOD assistance from civil authorities or is authorized by the President or SecDef. Title 32, USC, Section 317, states dual-status commander led joint task forces should be the usual and customary command and control arrangement established in response to an emergency or major disaster within the US when both federal and state military forces are supporting the response.”²²

The most notable use of the Armed Forces to respond to a disaster occurred as a result of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Roughly 72,000 military personnel participated in the response, including about 50,000 National Guard personnel serving in a Title 32 status. Some of the major activities conducted by these forces included search and rescue; evacuations from flooded areas and evacuations to medical treatment facilities; transportation and distribution of water, ice, food, and fuel; crowd control; local security; debris removal; medical treatment; and restoration of flood control systems.²³

National Response Framework (NRF)

DSCA in response to disasters is typically carried out under the National Response Framework (NRF). Under the NRF, local and state governments are expected to first deal with incidents under their jurisdiction and should request federal assistance when local resources are overwhelmed. It is at that point, where the DOD may provide support in response to a Request for Assistance (RFA), as part of the federal response.²⁴

The NRF is a guide to how the nation responds to all types of domestic disasters and emergencies. It is built on scalable, flexible, and adaptable concepts identified in the National Incident Management System (NIMS)²⁵ to align key roles and responsibilities.²⁶ The NRF describes specific authorities and best practices for managing incidents that range from the local level to large-scale terrorist attacks or natural disasters.²⁷



21 Defense Primer: Defense Support of Civil Authorities, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11324/6>

22 Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_28.pdf

23 Deployable Federal Assets Supporting Domestic Disaster Response Operations: Summary and Considerations for Congress, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R43560/9>

24 Defense Primer: Defense Support of Civil Authorities, <https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=830126>

25 NIMS guides all levels of government, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector to work together to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to and recover from incidents. National Incident management System, <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims>

26 National Response Framework, <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/frameworks/response>

27 Ibid.

Some Potential Uses of DOD Assets Under the National Response Framework¹⁵¹

- **Transportation:** Providing military transportation capacity to move essential resources; providing assets to complement temporarily degraded or disrupted air navigation services; providing support in the emergency operation and restoration of inland waterways, ports, and harbors, including dredging operations; restoring transportation infrastructure.
- **Communications:** Providing communications resources and capabilities.
- **Public Works and Engineering:** Providing expertise and construction management resources and support; conducting specialized salvage/wreck removal operations.
- **Firefighting:** Conducting firefighting activities on DOD installations and supporting firefighting operations on nonmilitary lands with personnel, equipment, and supplies; assisting urban and rural firefighting forces to obtain heavy equipment and/or demolition services as needed to suppress incident-related fires.
- **Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing:** Providing construction, engineering, and project management expertise and support for temporary housing and sheltering; inspecting mass care shelter sites to ensure suitability and accessibility of facilities; constructing temporary shelter facilities in the affected area.
- **Logistics:** Providing planning support, subsistence, administrative supply, petroleum product, engineering and construction supply, water and mobile units, medical material, telecommunications management, and transportation management support; providing bottled and bulk drinking water, construction materials, and engineering services; providing commodities distribution assistance and expertise to include, points of distribution training and state-level project management support for commodities missions; hauling, installing, operating, and maintaining generators for critical public facilities.
- **Public Health and Medical Services:** Conducting medical evacuations; coordinating patient reception, tracking, and management of patients evacuated on DOD assets; deploying medical, surgical, and behavioral health personnel for casualty clearing and staging, patient management, and treatment; augmenting civilian hospital staff and deployable federal teams; deploying chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear medical subject matter experts for technical consultation and medical support; providing epidemiological and occupational health support, telemedicine, and other specialized medical support; providing military medical personnel to assist in the protection of public health; providing available DOD medical supplies and materiel for use at points of distribution, hospitals or clinics, or medical care locations; assisting local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area officials in the provision of emergency medical, surgical, and behavioral healthcare; providing public health and medical surveillance, laboratory diagnostics, and confirmatory testing.
- **Search and Rescue (SAR):** Coordinating facilities, resources, and special capabilities to conduct and support air, land, and maritime SAR; coordinating and managing the satellite imagery; providing expert analysis of imagery; deploying specially trained and equipped structural engineers during structural collapse incidents and other disaster response missions; providing technical support and advice to assess damage, mitigate hazards, and enable rescue and lifesaving operations.
- **Oil and Hazardous Materials Response:** Providing response assistance for incidents involving contaminated debris, including waste sampling, classification, packaging, transportation, treatment, demolition, storm water management, and disposal; providing technical, operational, and emergency support in the ocean engineering disciplines of marine salvage, pollution abatement, and diving services.
- **Agriculture and Natural Resources:** Providing military specialists trained in foreign animal disease diagnosis, epidemiology, microbiology, immunology, entomology, pathology, and public health.
- **Energy:** Conducting power system stabilization and reestablishment activities.

Source: Deployable Federal Assets Supporting Domestic Disaster Response Operations: Summary and Considerations for Congress, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R43560/9>

Request for Assistance (RFA)

The typical method for providing DSCA is through a Request for Assistance (RFA). There are two methods to initiate DSCA: an RFA from civil authorities, or the direct authorization of the President or Secretary of Defense. An RFA from civil authorities will come from the lead federal agency (i.e., FEMA), and in some cases will be validated by a Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO).²⁸

The President or the SecDef can directly authorize DSCA, which might occur when time is of the essence, however, the more common way by which DSCA is initiated is through the RFA from a civil authority.²⁹ However, DOD does not provide assets in response to RFAs in all cases. For example, DOD might decline to provide certain assets if doing so would degrade its ability to fulfill its national security obligations. If the RFA is granted, DOD will coordinate with FEMA, a requesting agency, first responders and other partners to determine the level of support.^{30, 31}

²⁸ Defense Primer: Defense Support of Civil Authorities, <https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=830126>

²⁹ COVID-19: Defense Support of Civil Authorities, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IN/IN11305>

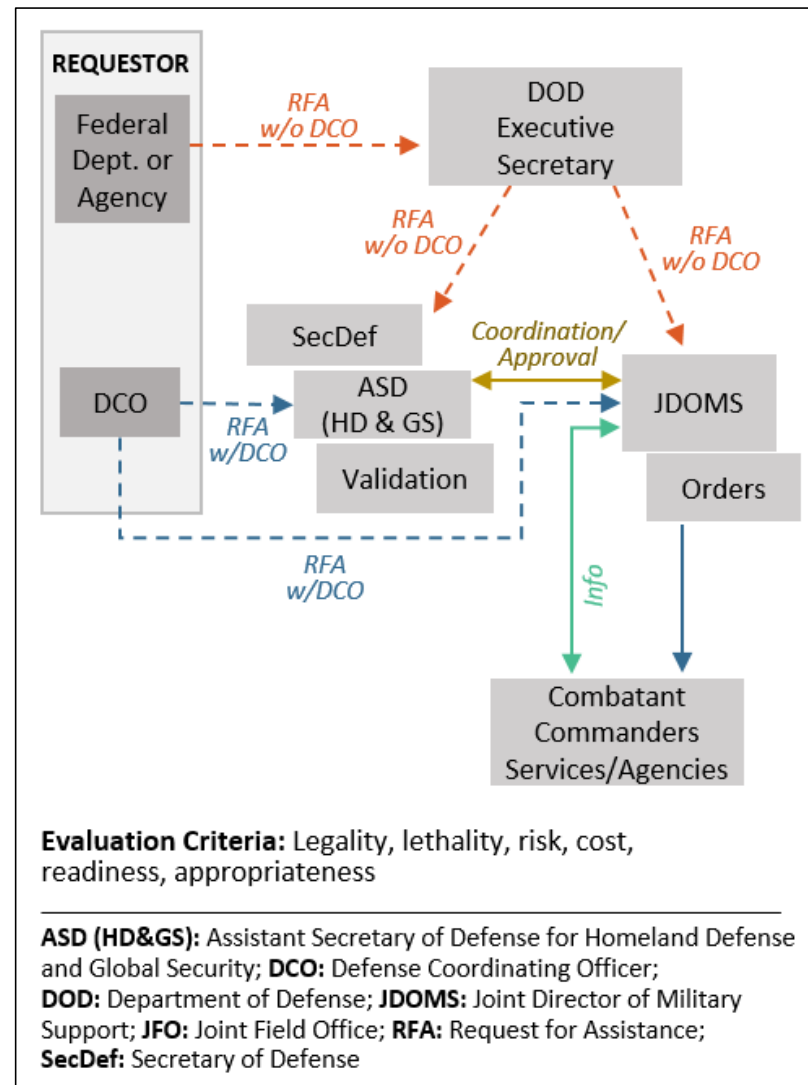
³⁰ Defense Primer: Defense Support of Civil Authorities, <https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=830126>

³¹ Deployable Federal Assets Supporting Domestic Disaster Response Operations: Summary and Considerations for Congress, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R43560/9>

DOD evaluates each request based on the following six criteria:

1. Legality (compliance with laws);
2. Lethality (potential use of lethal force by or against DoD Forces);
3. Risk (safety of DoD Forces);
4. Cost (including the source of funding and the effect on the DoD budget);
5. Appropriateness (whether providing the requested support is in the interest of the Department); and,
6. Readiness (impact on the Department of Defense's ability to perform its other primary missions)³²

Figure I. The Request for Assistance (RFA) Process



Note: Approval authority for some RFAs has been delegated to the commanders of U.S. Northern Command and U.S. Indo-Pacific Command.

Source: Adapted from Joint Publication 3-28, Defense Support of Civil Authorities, September 14, 2007, Figure II-1.

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS). Defense Primer: Defense Support of Civil Authorities, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11324/6>

32 Ibid.

According to CRS, the above figure illustrates how RFAs are generally processed, although requests may have slight differences that can create variations in the process.³³

Exceptions

Note that there are exceptions to when the DOD can provide DSCA support that are different than through the normal methods discussed above. This includes support provided pursuant to a Mutual and Automatic Aid agreement, support provided by DOD organizations with independent authorities, and under the “Immediate Response Authority” (discussed below).

Mutual and Automatic Aid: “Installation commanders may provide DSCA to local jurisdictions under mutual and automatic aid agreements (also known as reciprocal fire protection agreements), when requested. Support provided pursuant to a mutual and automatic aid agreement is not reimbursed with funding, but instead is reimbursed in-kind by reciprocal support.”³⁴

Several DOD organizations possess independent authorities and agreements to provide DSCA, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the National Geospatial--Intelligence Agency (NGA), and the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA).

In addition to work performed as part of the NRF, Congress gave USACE its own emergency response authority, commonly referred to as the Corps’ P.L. 84-99 authority, based on the Flood Control and Coastal Emergency Act, P.L. 84-99 (33 U.S.C. §701n).³⁵

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has independent statutory authorities regarding emergency management, such as section 5 of the Flood Control Act of 1941 (Public Law 84-99) (e.g., providing technical assistance; direct assistance such as providing sandbags, pumps, and other types of flood fight materials, emergency contracting; and emergency water assistance due to contaminated water source). Under the National Response Framework, USACE is assigned as the primary agency for Emergency Support Function No. 3--Public Works and Engineering. USACE assists FEMA by coordinating Federal public works and engineering-related support, as well as providing technical assistance, engineering expertise, and construction management to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and/or recover from domestic incidents.³⁶

USACE uses pre-awarded contracts that can be quickly activated for missions such as debris removal, temporary roofing, and temporary emergency power.³⁷

Additionally, the NGA, in accordance with 50 U.S.C. 3045, is authorized to provide geospatial intelligence support to other Federal departments and agencies.³⁸

Other DOD organizations have unique agreements for support. This includes the DLA, which has an agreement with FEMA to provide commodities, including fuel, to civil authorities responding to disasters.³⁹

33 Congressional Research Service. Defense Primer: Defense Support of Civil Authorities, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11324/6>

34 Hearing before the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications of the Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives 114th Congress, First Session, June 10, 2015, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-114hhrg95684/html/CHRG-114hhrg95684.htm>

35 Deployable Federal Assets Supporting Domestic Disaster Response Operations: Summary and Considerations for Congress, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R43560/9>

36 Hearing before the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications of the Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives 114th Congress, First Session, June 10, 2015, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-114hhrg95684/html/CHRG-114hhrg95684.htm>

37 Honolulu District Activates Emergency Operation Center, Response Teams for Storms, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1629992/honolulu-district-activates-emergency-operation-center-response-teams-for-storms/>

38 Hearing before the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications of the Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives 114th Congress, First Session, June 10, 2015, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-114hhrg95684/html/CHRG-114hhrg95684.htm>

39 Hearing before the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications of the Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives 114th Congress, First Session, June 10, 2015, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-114hhrg95684/html/CHRG-114hhrg95684.htm>

Immediate Response Authority

It may not be possible to secure timely approval for an RFA through the normal channels described above, in certain cases. In these cases, military commanders and certain DOD civilians have the authority, called the “Immediate Response Authority,” to immediately respond to RFAs from a civil authority. Responding officials must notify the National Joint Operations and Intelligence Center (NJOIC) of the details of the response. The NJOIC will in turn inform USNORTHCOM and/or USINDOPACOM and appropriate DOD components.^{40, 41}

As authorized by the Stafford Act, and prescribed by DODD 3025.18, Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA), federal military commanders, heads of DOD components, and responsible DOD civilian officials have immediate response authority. In response to an RFA from a civil authority, under imminently serious conditions and if time does not permit approval from higher authority, DOD officials may provide an immediate response by temporarily employing the resources under their control, subject to any supplemental direction provided by higher headquarters, to save lives, prevent human suffering, or mitigate great property damage within the US.^{42, 43, 44}

According to the JP 3-28, this authority does not permit actions that would subject civilians to the use of military power that is “regulatory, prescriptive, proscriptive, or compulsory.”⁴⁵

Immediate response ends when DOD assistance is no longer necessary or when a DOD authority directs an end to the response. The DOD official directing a response under this authority must make an assessment of the situation no later than 72 hours after receiving the request, to determine if continued DOD support is necessary. DOD response may not exceed 10 days without presidential approval (Under Title 42, USC).^{46, 47}

Emergency Support Functions (ESF)

Under the National Response Framework (NRF), Emergency Support Functions (ESF) describe the Federal coordinating structures that group resources and capabilities into functional areas that are most frequently needed in a national response. These ESF’s can be found in the annexes of the NRF. The ESFs are the primary, but not exclusive, federal coordinating structures to “build, sustain, and deliver the response core capabilities.” The Federal Government organizes response resources and capabilities under the ESF construct, bringing the capabilities of the USG and national-level assets together. At its basic concept, the ESFs are groups of organizations that work together to deliver core capabilities and support an effective response, which no single department or agency could accomplish alone.^{48, 49}

40 Defense Primer: Defense Support of Civil Authorities, <https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=830126>

41 Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_28.pdf

42 32 C.F.R. §185.4(g)

43 Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_28.pdf

44 Deployable Federal Assets Supporting, Domestic Disaster Response Operations: Summary and Considerations for Congress, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R43560/9>

45 Adopted from DOD Directive 3025.18, Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_28.pdf

46 Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_28.pdf

47 Defense Primer: Defense Support of Civil Authorities, <https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=830126>

48 National Response Framework, <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/frameworks/response>

49 Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_28.pdf

There are 15 ESFs in total:

Emergency Support Functions

ESF #1	Transportation	ESF #8	Public Health and Medical Services
ESF #2	Communications	ESF #9	Search and Rescue
ESF #3	Public Works	ESF #10	Oil and Hazardous Materials Response
ESF #4	Firefighting	ESF #11	Agriculture and Natural Resources
ESF #5	Information and Planning	ESF #12	Energy
ESF #6	Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing, and Human Services	ESF #13	Public Safety and Security
ESF #7	Logistics	ESF #14	(Superseded)
		ESF #15	External Affairs

Legend

ESF emergency support function

Note: ESF #14 (Superseded by the National Disaster Recovery Framework)

Source: Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_28.pdf

The DOD is a support agency for every ESF. Through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) the DOD is a lead and coordinating agency for ESF No. 3--Public Works and Engineering.⁵⁰ Additionally, for ESF No. 9, CDRUSNORTHCOM serves as the DOD lead in the USNORTHCOM AOR for matters pertaining to planning and operations of ESF No. 9.⁵¹

ESF #3 – Public Works and Engineering (DOD/USACE is the primary agency): Coordinates and organizes the resources of the USG to facilitate the delivery of multiple core capabilities.

ESF #9 – Search and Rescue (DHS/FEMA are the primary agencies): Deploys federal SAR resources to provide life-saving assistance to state and local authorities, including local SAR coordinators and mission coordinators, when there is an actual or anticipated request for federal SAR assistance. DOD is one of four primary agencies for ESF #9.⁵²

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

Responsibilities for USACE under ESF No. 3, includes “technical assistance, engineering, and construction management, emergency contracting, and repair of power systems, public water and wastewater, and solid waste facilities. The Corps also assists in monitoring and stabilizing damaged structures and demolishing structures designated as immediate hazards to public health and safety. It also provides technical assistance in clearing, removing, and disposing of contaminated and uncontaminated debris from public property, and establishing ground and water routes into affected areas.”⁵³

USACE has more than 40 deployable planning and response teams (PRTs) that have been “specifically trained to perform Corps emergency response functions, including provision of ice, water, emergency power, debris removal, temporary housing, temporary roofing, and structural safety assessments. The Corps also has between 15 and 20 deployable tactical operating systems; these function as mobile command, control, and communication team and equipment units during a disaster.”⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Hearing before the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications of the Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives 114th Congress, First Session, June 10, 2015, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-114hhrg95684/html/CHRG-114hhrg95684.htm>

⁵¹ Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_28.pdf

⁵² Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_28.pdf

⁵³ Deployable Federal Assets Supporting Domestic Disaster Response Operations: Summary and Considerations for Congress, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R43560/9>

⁵⁴ Ibid.

USACE maintains LNOs at both USNORTHCOM and USINDOPACOM to ensure close coordination between the USACE and the supported CCDR on USACE operational roles and missions during disaster response.⁵⁵

Role of USINDOPACOM and USNORTHCOM

For DSCA operations, the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) designates a supported combatant commander (CCDR), which is usually Commander, USINDOPACOM for Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam and CNMI, and Commander, USNORTHCOM for the continental United States, Alaska, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands. The supported CCDR “may elect to employ a JTF, lead functional component command, or other C2 structure IAW JP 3-0, Joint Operations.” Additionally, the “Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) may publish, if required, a SecDef-approved execute order (EXORD) to further delineate support relationships, available forces, end state, purpose, and SecDef-approved scope of actions.”⁵⁶

USINDOPACOM organization related to DSCA:

3-37. ...USPACOM conducts DSCA through assigned Service components and designated functional components. Depending on the disaster response, USPACOM will activate a task force (TF); either TF East (Hawaii), TF West (Guam), and/or a TF Homeland (when one or more task forces are activated). There are two USPACOM Defense Coordinating Officers (DCO), DCO-East for Hawaii and DCO-West for Guam. When USPACOM executes DSCA plans, DCO-East becomes operational control to USPACOM Joint Operations Center. USPACOM can also activate a joint task force (Joint Task Force-Homeland Defense) to perform DSCA and homeland defense missions.

3-38. USPACOM forms Joint Task Force-Homeland Defense by combining a Service headquarters (such as an Army division), a joint signal element, personnel from a joint manning document, and a DHS liaison. This joint task force conducts DSCA within the USPACOM AOR.

3-39. In accordance with the CJCS DSCA EXORD, the Commander, USPACOM has the authority to alert and prepare to deploy assigned and allocated forces in support of a primary agency. The Commander, USPACOM, may request, deploy, and employ forces upon notification from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Secretary of Defense, in support of a validated request for assistance from a primary agency.⁵⁷

Dual-Status Commander

Both active duty forces and National Guard forces can be used in DSCA operations. While active duty forces are under command and control of the President, National Guard forces remain under the command and control of their state or territorial governor, unless called into federal service. When both active duty and National Guard personnel are used, DOD may appoint a “dual-status commander” at the request of the governor. “The dual-status commander acts within both chains of command, relaying orders from the federal chain of command to federal military forces and from the state chain of command to National Guard forces.”⁵⁸

DSCA Planning Considerations/DSCA Execute Order (EXORD)

To expedite planning and operational response, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) publishes a DSCA EXORD as well as a CBRN response EXORD to allow prompt force deployment. DOD planners work with National Guard and civilian planners to develop specific regional civil-military plans for DSCA, which inform planning at all levels. (For INDOPACOM see USINDOPACOM CONPLAN 5001 Defense Support of Civil Authorities).⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_28.pdf

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ ADP 3-28 Defense Support of Civil Authorities, July 2019, https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/pdf/web/ARN19349_ADP%203-28%20FINAL%20WEB.pdf

⁵⁸ Defense Primer: Defense Support of Civil Authorities, <https://www.hsd.org/?abstract&did=830126>

⁵⁹ Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_28.pdf

In 2013, the Department of Defense published a standing DSCA execute order, or EXORD, that provided commanders of NORTHCOM and PACOM more delegated authority to provide critical life-saving and life-sustaining capabilities faster, including defense coordinating officers (DCO) and the defense coordinating elements (DCE) they bring, aircraft for disaster area search and rescue, joint task forces to command and control Federal military forces, and aeromedical patient evacuation and transportation.⁶⁰

Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO)/Defense Coordination Element (DCE)

Federal support is provided in response to requests from state or local officials to the federal coordinating officer (FCO). The FCO coordinates for DOD support through the defense coordinating officer (DCO).⁶¹

The DCO as defined by JP 3-28 is the “Department of Defense single point of contact for domestic emergencies who is assigned to a joint field office (JFO) to process requirements for military support; forward mission assignments through proper channels to the appropriate military organizations; and assign military liaisons, as appropriate, to activated emergency support functions.”⁶² Joint Field Offices (JFOs) are multi-agency coordination centers established at domestic emergency incident sites.⁶³

The DCO leads a group of staff and military liaison officers, called the Defense Coordination Element (DCE), who assist him with facilitating coordination and support. The DCE participates in the development of regional plans and maintains relationships with DOD installations and National Guard leadership. According to JP 3-28, these relationships are important since they allow the region to rapidly identify potential facilities to serve as Federal Staging Areas (FSA) or Incident Support Bases (ISB).⁶⁴

After a Presidential Disaster Declaration, “the DCO and the DCE are activated in response to a FEMA Mission Assignment (MA), which are used by FEMA to request assistance from the DOD, to task other Federal agencies, and to provide reimbursement for direct assistance during emergencies and disaster.”⁶⁵

FEMA Mission Assignments are generated by the FCO at the FEMA Joint Field Office (JFO) and assignments requesting DOD assistance are validated by the DCO and then sent by the FCO through FEMA to the SecDef for approval. FEMA expanded the MA process to include Pre-scripted Mission Assignments (PSMA) that are developed with FEMA and agencies expected to support a federal response in an effort to facilitate more rapid coordination. PSMA for the most commonly-requested assistance from DOD are available in an effort to reduce processing delays.^{66, 67}

60 Hearing before the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications of the Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives 114th Congress, First Session, June 10, 2015, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-114hhrg95684/html/CHRG-114hhrg95684.htm>

61 Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_28.pdf

62 Ibid.

63 Defense Primer: Defense Support of Civil Authorities, <https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=830126>

64 Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_28.pdf

65 Hearing before the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications of the Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives 114th Congress, First Session, June 10, 2015, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-114hhrg95684/html/CHRG-114hhrg95684.htm>

66 Ibid.

67 Federal Military Forces Disaster Response: Pre-scripted Mission Assignments (PSMA), <https://emilms.fema.gov/is0075/groups/40.html>

Some sample DOD PSMA's:

Federal Military Forces Disaster Response: Pre-scripted Mission Assignments (PSMA)

In recent years, FEMA has expanded the MA process to include Pre-Scripted Mission Assignments (PSMA's), which, in coordination with FEMA, are developed by Federal agencies subject to supporting a Federal response. PSMA's standardize the process of developing MAs to facilitate a more rapid coordination process. They specify what type of assistance is required (personnel and equipment), identify a statement of work, and provide projected cost. Some representative DoD PSMA's related to the corresponding ESFs include:

Emergency Support Function (ESF)	Sample PSMA's
ESF #1 Transportation	Rotary Wing Lift (Medium), Rotary Wing Lift (Heavy), Strategic Transportation Support
ESF #2 Communications	Communications Support to First Responders
ESF #3 Public Works and Engineering	Emergency Route Clearance
ESF #5 Emergency Management	Aerial Imagery
ESF #6 Mass Care	Temporary Housing Sites
ESF #7 Resource Support	Fuel Distribution Points- Ground Vehicle
ESF #8 Public Health and Medical Service	Rotary Wing Medical Patient Evacuation, Theater Patient Movement Capability (National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) Activation), Mortuary Affairs Assistance
ESF #9 Search and Rescue	Rotary Wing Lift (Medium) for Search and Rescue(SAR)
ESF #15 External Affairs	Public Broadcast Transmission Support

A PSMA is not an approved MA and use of PSMA language does not preclude the use of the FEMA Action Request Form (ARF) (FEMA Form 90-126.) in the normal MA process. In response to a disaster, all requests for DoD assistance are evaluated on a case-by-case basis and are subject to the approval of the Secretary of Defense. Annex F of the DSCA Handbook Tactical Level Commander and Staff Toolkit (GTA 90-01-021) lists a summary of the DoD's 24 PSMA's as approved on 11 September 2009.

Source: <https://emilms.fema.gov/is0075/groups/40.html>

Lessons learned from DSCA operations:

2017 brought even greater challenges, as DOD responded to an unusually high number of disasters. These included a trio of category 4 and 5 hurricanes (Harvey, Irma, and Maria) and wildland fires, as well as an earthquake in Mexico. The disasters of 2017 resulted in a thorough after action review process to ensure DOD capabilities are used most efficiently in complex disasters. Initial themes are focused on enabling common pictures across all levels of government for requesting, tasking, and understanding the execution of DOD capabilities throughout the disaster response. It is apparent the DOD recognition of DSCA as a key mission has resulted in the improved planning, training, exercising, and anticipation of key capabilities. A common thread throughout DSCA operations is the importance of partnerships and professional relationships that enable enhanced unity of effort for the accomplishment of DSCA missions.⁶⁸

Service Publications on DSCA

The U.S. military services also publish guidance on DSCA:

U.S. Air Force

“Air Force Instruction 10-801 29 January 2020, Operations, Defense Support of Civil Authorities”
https://static.e-publishing.af.mil/production/1/af_a3/publication/afi10-801/afi10-801.pdf

This 48-page Instruction provides AF guidance on Federal and State military roles within each DSCA Geographic Combatant Commander (GCC) Area of Responsibility (AOR) tasked with DSCA planning and operations. Identifies the DOD DSCA Combatant Commands (CCMD) as U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) and U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM).⁶⁹

And, “Air Force Policy Directive 10-8, 4 June 2018, Operations, Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA)”

https://static.e-publishing.af.mil/production/1/af_a3/publication/afpd10-8/afpd10-8.pdf

This publication establishes policy to ensure that the Air Force plans, organizes, and trains forces to conduct DSCA operations consistent with the Air Force mission.

⁶⁸ Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_28.pdf

⁶⁹ Air Force Instruction 10-801 29 January 2020, Operations Defense Support of Civil Authorities, https://static.e-publishing.af.mil/production/1/af_a3/publication/afi10-801/afi10-801.pdf

U.S. Army

“ADP 3-28 Defense Support of Civil Authorities, July 2019”

https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/pdf/web/ARN19349_AD%203-28%20FINAL%20WEB.pdf

Army doctrine publication (ADP) 3-28 is the doctrinal foundation for the Army’s contribution to DSCA. This 112 page document explains how the Army conducts DSCA missions and National Guard civil support missions.⁷⁰

U.S. Marine Corps

“ATP 3-28.1/Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3-36.3/NTTP 3-57.2/AFTTP 3-2.67, Multi-Service Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA)”⁷¹

Foreign Disaster Relief (FDR)/Foreign Humanitarian Assistance (FHA)

While DSCA operations provide support to natural disaster response domestically, DOD Foreign Disaster Relief (FDR)/Foreign Humanitarian Assistance (FHA) provides disaster relief support to foreign countries that request and/or accept offers of assistance from the U.S. government.

The DOD provides FDR assistance in support of U.S. international disaster response efforts generally when the response requirements exceed or exhaust civilian capabilities and unique DOD capabilities are requested or required. As such, DOD support requested often includes logistics, transportation, and delivery of relief supplies, aerial reconnaissance, and search and rescue operations.

Thus, if DOD’s unique assets are required or requested, U.S. military personnel and assets become part of a multi-agency U.S. response, that is coordinated by the lead federal agency, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)’s Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs (BHA) (previously known as the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, or OFDA), while DSCA operations are led by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

FDR missions supported by the DOD in the USINDOPACOM Area of Responsibility (AOR) have ranged from disaster relief support to powerful storms in the region such as the response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in 2013; to mega-disasters such as the devastating Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami in 2004, which affected over a dozen countries; and, to the unique Cave Search and Rescue mission in Thailand in 2018.

While relief operations for FDR missions and DSCA missions may provide the same type of unique support that the DOD can provide, the main difference of course is that FDR operations are held on foreign soil, while DSCA operations are in support of domestic disaster support.

For more information on DOD’s role in FDR please see the following publications:

Joint Publication 3-29, Foreign Humanitarian Assistance, 14 May 2019

https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_29.pdf

“This publication provides fundamental principles and guidance to plan, execute, and assess foreign humanitarian assistance operations.”

⁷⁰ ADP 3-28 Defense Support of Civil Authorities, July 2019, https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/pdf/web/ARN19349_AD%203-28%20FINAL%20WEB.pdf

⁷¹ Summary not available. Referenced in: Joint Publication 3-28 (JP 3-28) Defense Support of Civil Authorities, 29 October 2018, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_28.pdf

Department of Defense Support to Foreign Disaster Relief (Handbook for JTF Commanders and Below)
<https://fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/disaster.pdf>

This handbook addresses DOD's response to natural disasters in permissive environments. It "provides a Concept of Operations (CONOPS) and Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP) for joint forces at the operational and tactical levels tasked to perform Foreign Disaster Relief (FDR) operations in support of the Department of State and US Agency for International Development and in coordination with International Organizations...It is intended to be an overarching guide as opposed to a rigid construct."

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs (BHA)

USAID's Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs (BHA) serves as the lead U.S. federal agency for foreign disaster relief efforts. If requested, the DOD will support the multi-agency U.S. government foreign disaster response led by USAID/BHA.

As the lead U.S. federal coordinator for international disaster assistance, BHA coordinates U.S. government entities, including the DOD, to respond to natural disasters and complex emergencies worldwide. BHA provides humanitarian assistance, before, during and after an emergency. The Bureau was established in 2020 in an effort to streamline USAID humanitarian responses, bringing together the former USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and Food for Peace (FFP).^{72, 73}

In 2018, the then-named OFDA delivered more than US\$1.8 billion in humanitarian assistance.⁷⁴ OFDA/BHA has historically led and worked closely with USINDOPACOM personnel to provide disaster relief in the Indo-Pacific in dozens of foreign disaster assistance operations.⁷⁵

Domestic Disaster Response Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

FEMA is the U.S. lead federal agency responsible for helping U.S. states and territories prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural disasters.⁷⁶ Part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) oversees U.S. federal emergency management domestically, for states, U.S. territories and Tribal Nations. FEMA's mission is to help "people before, during and after disasters." FEMA was officially created in 1979 through Executive Order 12127 by President Jimmy Carter and on 1 March, 2003, FEMA became part of the DHS with 21 other organizations.^{77, 78}

For natural and man-made disasters, the U.S. government lead is generally FEMA that DOD will support, but can be another designated lead agency. For other responses that require DOD assistance, such as Health Emergencies, like the COVID-19 outbreak, another U.S. agency, like the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is the lead U.S. agency that DOD supports.⁷⁹

The historic landfall of Hurricane Katrina in August 2005 and subsequent destruction left by the hurricane spurred Congress to pass the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act

⁷² "Who We Are: Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA)," <https://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/organization/bureaus/bureau-humanitarian-assistance>

⁷³ USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/BHA_Fact_Sheet_082120.pdf

⁷⁴ "U.S. Disaster Relief at Home and Abroad," <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/us-disaster-relief-home-and-abroad>

⁷⁵ USINDOPACOM Foreign Disaster Response in the Indo-Asia-Pacific, June 1991 – June 2019, <https://www.cfe-dmha.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=twvMY081NH8%3d&portalid=0>

⁷⁶ 2018 PACIFIC DISASTERS: Preliminary Observations on FEMA's Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-20-614T>

⁷⁷ About Us, <https://www.fema.gov/about>

⁷⁸ History of FEMA, <https://www.fema.gov/about/history>

⁷⁹ COVID-19: Defense Support of Civil Authorities, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IN/IN11305>

(PKEMRA) of 2006 which “established FEMA as a distinct agency within DHS, defined the agency’s primary mission, and designated the FEMA Administrator as the principal advisor to the President, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of Homeland Security for all matters relating to emergency management.”⁸⁰

“The primary mission of the Agency is to reduce the loss of life and property and protect the Nation from all hazards, including natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters, by leading and supporting the Nation in a risk-based, comprehensive emergency management system of preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation.”

--The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006⁸¹

The PKEMRA also codified into law the key principle that “FEMA may provide accelerated Federal assistance and support where necessary in the absence of a specific request by a state to save lives and prevent suffering.”⁸²

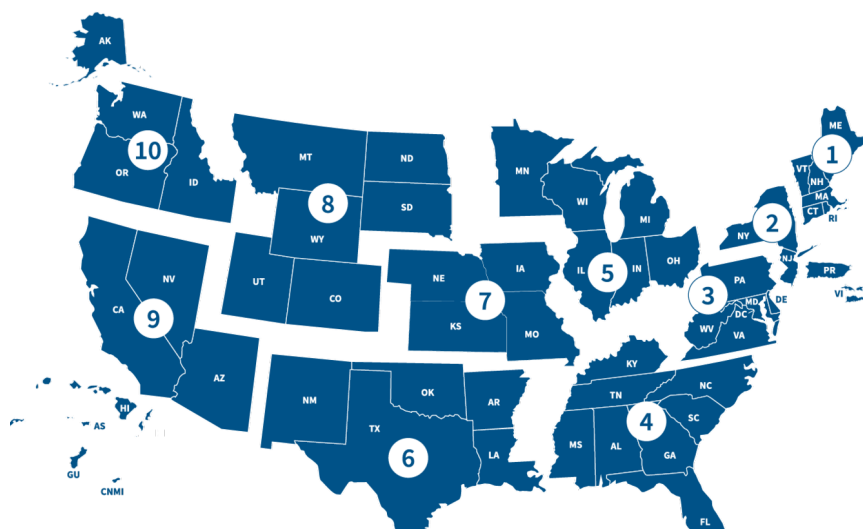
Organization of FEMA

There are more than 20,000 FEMA staff members, but personnel can go to over 50,000 active members during major disasters, according to FEMA. FEMA's headquarters is in Washington, D.C., and Program Offices and Regional Offices are located throughout the U.S. There are 10 regional offices located across the country. For the INDOPACOM AOR, FEMA Region 9 office, located in Oakland, California, oversees federal emergency management for 150 Tribal Nations and the following States and Pacific territories:

FEMA Region 9 office (also FEMA Region IX)

- Arizona
- California
- Hawaii
- Nevada
- Guam
- American Samoa
- Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)
- Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI)
- Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)⁸³

From FEMA: “*...Region IX also has the unique responsibility to coordinate with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to support the Federal Government’s long-standing relationship and treaty obligations with the Compact Nations of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.”⁸⁴ (This arrangement will be discussed later)



FEMA Region Map

Source: <https://www.fema.gov/about/organization/regions>

FEMA Region 9 office oversees a diverse population of over 47 million people, spanning eight time zones covering 399,000 square miles.⁸⁵

80 History of FEMA, <https://www.fema.gov/about/history>

81 Publication 1, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/publication-one_english_2019.pdf

82 Ibid.

83 “Region 9,” <https://www.fema.gov/about/organization/region-9>

84 Publication 1, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/publication-one_english_2019.pdf

85 About FEMA (PPT), https://naleo.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/NALEO_PI_EmergencyRespMgmt_PPT_Ms.Verde_9.13.19.pdf

The Stafford Act

After its creation in 1979, FEMA's authorities were further defined and expanded by the Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Amendments of 1988, which amended the Disaster Relief Act of 1974, renaming it the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (commonly known as the Stafford Act). The Act provides "clear direction for emergency management and established the current statutory framework for disaster response and recovery through presidential disaster declarations."⁸⁶

As FEMA puts it in its "Publication 1" capstone doctrine:

The Stafford Act provides clear direction for our role in emergency management and establishes the current statutory framework for disaster response and recovery through Presidential disaster declarations. When resources exceed the capabilities of the state, local, tribal, or territorial government, a declaration request may be submitted by the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive to receive supplemental Federal assistance.

For necessary expenses in carrying out the Stafford Act, Congress makes appropriations to the Disaster Relief Fund (DRF), which enables us to direct, coordinate, manage, and fund eligible response and recovery efforts associated with domestic major disasters and emergencies that overwhelm state, local, tribal, or territorial resources. The Stafford Act remains the formal and legal foundation for our role as leaders in emergency management.⁸⁷

Federal agencies become involved in responding to a disaster when the disaster is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the affected local government, state or territory. In such cases, in accordance with the Stafford Act, the President may declare a major disaster in response to a request by the governor of a state or territory or by the chief executive of a tribal government. Major disaster declarations, also sometimes referred to as Presidential disaster declarations, can make available a wide range of federal response and recovery programs for those affected and allows FEMA to commence post-disaster recovery programs under the Act: "In accordance with the Stafford Act and in response to the request of a governor, territorial, or tribal chief executive's request, the President of the United States may declare that a major disaster exists...Major disaster declarations can trigger a variety of federal response and recovery assistance programs for individuals, government, and nongovernmental entities."⁸⁸

The Stafford Act is the primary legal authority for Federal emergency and disaster assistance to State and local governments. It authorizes the President to issue major disaster declarations and authorizes Federal agencies to provide assistance to States overwhelmed by disasters. Most of the Stafford Act provisions come into play after an emergency request from a State's Governor. The Stafford Act also sets the guidelines for reimbursements from Federal funds to Federal agencies and States. As is the case with many of the legal authorities governing disaster relief, the Stafford Act is based on the premise that most incidents begin and end locally and are managed on a daily basis at the lowest possible geographical, organizational, and jurisdictional level.⁸⁹

Once a major disaster is declared, states, territories, and tribes may obtain federal assistance through FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund (DRF). The DRF is the primary source of federal funding to provide disaster assistance following a major disaster or emergency declared by the President. FEMA has different mechanisms to help coordinate and deliver the federal government's response to disasters, which includes assigning missions to other federal partners, "which are work orders FEMA issues directing another federal agency to utilize its authorities and the resources granted to it under federal law in support of direct assistance to state, local, tribal, and territorial governments." Examples of these include requesting assistance from the DOD due to its unique capabilities, and requesting medical teams

⁸⁶ History of FEMA, <https://www.fema.gov/about/history>

⁸⁷ Publication 1, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/publication-one_english_2019.pdf

⁸⁸ 2018 PACIFIC DISASTERS: Preliminary Observations on FEMA's Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-20-614T>

⁸⁹ Hearing before the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications of the Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives 114th Congress, First Session, June 10, 2015, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-114hhrg95684/html/CHRG-114hhrg95684.htm>

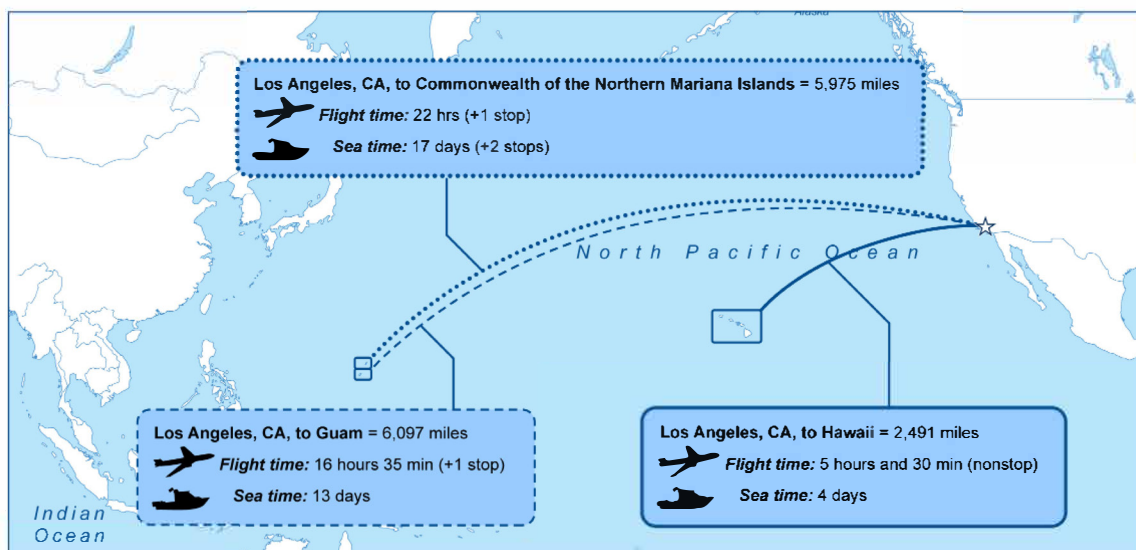
from the Department of Health and Human Services.⁹⁰

FEMA also deploys its personnel to affected areas to provide assistance at the site of the disaster. FEMA also deploys Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMAT) to affected areas “to provide leadership in identifying and providing federal assistance and to coordinate and integrate inter-jurisdictional response to support an affected state, tribe, or territory.”⁹¹

According to the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) IMAT teams are referred to as “Stafford Act employees.” Stafford Act employees provide “support for disaster-related activities and augments FEMA’s disaster workforce at facilities, regional offices, and headquarters. Stafford Act employees also include reservists, who work on an intermittent basis and are deployed as needed to fulfill incident management roles within their cadre function.”⁹²

Challenges of Responding to Disasters in the Pacific Region

Due to the vast Pacific Ocean and remoteness of Hawaii and the Pacific territories, disaster response in the region is challenging. Hawaii and Pacific-area U.S. territories must rely on their own resources for a longer period of time following a disaster, whereas locations on the continental U.S. are likely to get relief supplies quicker. This is due to longer travel time from the continental U.S. to ship supplies and personnel to affected areas. Delivering relief by plane or sea transport to Hawaii and the Pacific Island territories can take hours longer, or even days, by air and potentially weeks by boat.⁹³ This challenge of distance, is often referred to as the “Tyranny of Distance.”



Source: For the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands and Guam, based on Federal Emergency Management Agency; For Hawaii, based on GAO estimate. | GAO-20-614T

Source: 2018 PACIFIC DISASTERS: Preliminary Observations on FEMA’s Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-20-614T>

Following an active storm season in 2017, FEMA began working to increase capacity in its Pacific area distribution center facilities, located in Hawaii and Guam, which store commonly used disaster relief supplies. In addition to the centers in Hawaii and Guam, there are five centers located throughout the continental United States.⁹⁴

90 2018 PACIFIC DISASTERS: Preliminary Observations on FEMA’s Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-20-614T>

91 Ibid.

92 Ibid.

93 Ibid.

94 2018 PACIFIC DISASTERS: Preliminary Observations on FEMA’s Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-20-614T>

FEMA Overseas Assistance

Interestingly, while FEMA primarily oversees federal emergency management for states, territories, and tribal nations, there have been a few instances where FEMA has assisted overseas. A few examples are listed by FEMA:

Some Unique FEMA Response Coordination Efforts

- ***“Bam, Iran Earthquake – 2003: At the request of the Iranian Government, FEMA sent two International Medical Surgical Response Teams to set up a temporary field hospital.***
- ***Haiti Earthquake – 2010: Supporting USAID, FEMA established a Joint Information Center on the island. FEMA also sent search and rescue teams, communications equipment, and staff from the Mobile Emergency Response Support system.***
- ***Ebola Virus – 2014: FEMA collaborated with over a dozen Federal agencies, states, the private sector, and other nations in combatting the spread of Ebola domestically and overseas.”⁹⁵***

For more information on FEMA please see its “Publication 1,” considered by the agency to be its “capstone doctrine”: “We Are FEMA Helping People Before, During and After Disasters,” at https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/publication-one_english_2019.pdf

DOD also supplies a number of personnel within FEMA headquarters and its regional offices to coordinate its operations. Liaison officers from Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, the Joint Staff, and NORTHCOM permanently reside within the FEMA Response Directorate to coordinate. NORTHCOM also supplies permanent DCOs in each FEMA region and an operational planner within the FEMA Headquarters Response Directorate Planning Division. DOD has also provided two full-time staff to two of the National IMATs, whose primary role will be as planners working to ensure that all DOD resources are properly integrated in response and recovery efforts. When not engaged in a response, these individuals will be involved with FEMA’s planning efforts.⁹⁶

FEMA/USAID partnership for disaster relief and reconstruction in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI)

A unique arrangement for disaster relief exists between FEMA and USAID regarding the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI). While RMI and FSM are foreign countries and not territories or possessions of the U.S., a special arrangement between FEMA and USAID regarding the provision of disaster relief is in place. According to USAID, to support the U.S. Government’s relationship and treaty obligations with the Compact Nations, the Compact designates USAID as responsible for providing disaster assistance and coordinating the USG response to disasters in FSM and RMI.⁹⁷ Under the arrangement, the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia are eligible to request a disaster declaration and receive U.S. assistance.⁹⁸

FEMA and USAID/BHA maintains this unique agreement and relationship when it comes to supporting FSM and RMI during disaster relief and recovery efforts. On November 4, 2008, USAID assumed primary responsibility for U.S. Government disaster relief and reconstruction in FSM and RMI from FEMA. Previous to that date, FEMA had provided relief and reconstruction assistance to RMI and FSM. The move reflected “the transition of FSM and RMI from U.S.-administered trust territories to independent nations.”⁹⁹

Although USAID is the primary U.S. agency responsible for U.S. relief and reconstruction in the two countries, USAID uses FEMA funding under a unique arrangement that is released upon a U.S.

⁹⁵ Unique Response Coordination Efforts in Our History, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/publication-one_english_2019.pdf
⁹⁶ Hearing before the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications of the Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives 114th Congress, First Session, June 10, 2015, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-114hrg95684/html/CHRG-114hrg95684.htm>

⁹⁷ Compact(s) of Free Association for Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) and the Federated States of Micronesia, <https://www.usaid.gov/pacific-islands/documents/compacts-free-association-marshall-islands-micronesia>

⁹⁸ FEMA Fact Sheet Disaster Declaration Process, <https://www.mauicounty.gov/DocumentCenter/View/95069/FEMA-Disaster-Declaration-Process-Fact-Sheet?bidId=>

⁹⁹ USAID/BHA Program Summary Federated States of Micronesia and Republic of the Marshall Islands October 2020, https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/FSM_and_RMI_Program_Summary_Revised_10_20_2020.pdf

Presidential Disaster Declaration (PDD) to assist RMI and FSM in providing assistance following a major disaster.¹⁰⁰ Under the arrangement, USAID and FEMA collaborate to “provide a robust program of emergency disaster relief and reconstruction similar in type and level, but not identical, to the assistance that FEMA previously provided these islands,” according to USAID¹⁰¹

FEMA and USAID coordinate based on the “USAID/FEMA Operational Blueprint for Disaster Relief and Reconstruction in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) (also known as the “Operational Blueprint,” or “OBP”) that was developed to provide a framework for USG disaster response and reconstruction. The OBP is considered a supplemental document to the Compact(s) of Free Association for RMI and FSM.¹⁰² The Operational Blueprint outlines the roles and responsibilities of FEMA and USAID, provided the types of assistance and the processes by which this assistance would be provided to the islands.^{103, 104} The two agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to adopt the Operational Blueprint on January 5, 2009.¹⁰⁵

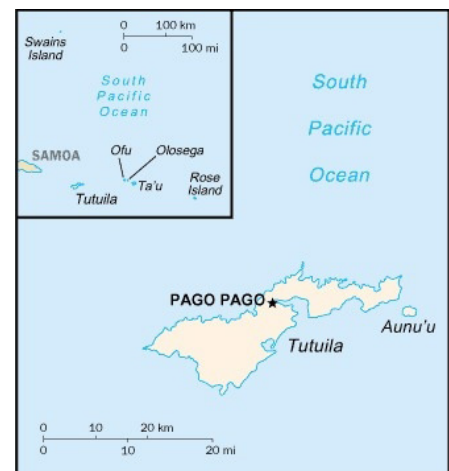
Under the Operational Blueprint, “FEMA must participate in the Joint Damage Assessment (JDA); process the President’s request for a disaster; and if approved, provide funding to USAID. FEMA may provide subject matter expertise (SME) throughout the disaster operation, as appropriate.”¹⁰⁶

In addition to working with FEMA, USAID/BHA collaborates with USAID/Philippines, U.S. Embassy Majuro, U.S. Embassy Kolonia, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the governments of FSM and RMI, to create humanitarian programs in FSM and RMI. This includes supporting COVID-19 pandemic response, providing technical assistance for response and recovery, and other activities in response to natural disasters.¹⁰⁷

American Samoa

American Samoa consists of seven islands—five volcanic islands and two coral atolls—which lie in the South Pacific, about 2,600 miles southwest of Hawaii. American Samoa has a combined land area of 76 square miles, which is slightly larger than the area of Washington, D.C.¹⁰⁸ The U.S. territory’s population was estimated at 58,700 in 2017. The capital city is Pago Pago, located on the main island of Tutuila.¹⁰⁹

Approximately 98 percent of the population lives on Tutuila. Government operations and most economic activity takes place in and around Pago Pago harbor. Most of Tutuila consists of rugged terrain. Among natural hazards, the territory faces the risk of tsunamis and other coastal hazards which is exacerbated by the fact that a significant portion of American Samoa’s population and infrastructure is located in low-lying coastal areas.¹¹⁰



Map of American Samoa

Source: The World Factbook.

<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/american-samoa/map>

100 USAID/BHA Program Summary Federated States of Micronesia and Republic of the Marshall Islands October 2020, https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/FSM_and_RMI_Program_Summary_Revised_10_20_2020.pdf

101 Compact(s) of Free Association for Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) and the Federated States of Micronesia, <https://www.usaid.gov/pacific-islands/documents/compacts-free-association-marshall-islands-micronesia>

102 Ibid.

103 USAID/BHA Program Summary Federated States of Micronesia and Republic of the Marshall Islands October 2020, https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/FSM_and_RMI_Program_Summary_Revised_10_20_2020.pdf

104 Compact(s) of Free Association for Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) and the Federated States of Micronesia, <https://www.usaid.gov/pacific-islands/documents/compacts-free-association-marshall-islands-micronesia>

105 USAID/FEMA Operational Blueprint for Disaster Relief and Reconstruction in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) - January 31, 2017, https://2012-2017.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1861/Operational_Blueprint_FEMA-USAID-OFDA_FINAL_31JAN17.pdf

106 Compact(s) of Free Association for Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) and the Federated States of Micronesia, <https://www.usaid.gov/pacific-islands/documents/compacts-free-association-marshall-islands-micronesia>

107 USAID/BHA Program Summary Federated States of Micronesia and Republic of the Marshall Islands October 2020, https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/FSM_and_RMI_Program_Summary_Revised_10_20_2020.pdf

108 American Samoa: Economic Trends, Status of the Tuna Canning Industry, and Stakeholders’ Views on Minimum Wage Increases, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-20-467>

109 U.S. TERRITORIES: Public Debt Outlook – 2019 Update, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-19-525>

110 American Samoa: Economic Trends, Status of the Tuna Canning Industry, and Stakeholders’ Views on Minimum Wage Increases, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-20-467>

Other significant risks include: Cyclones, earthquakes, landslides/mudslides, drought, flooding, disease outbreaks, and man-made disasters.¹¹¹ Tropical Cyclone season for American Samoa formally begins November 1 and runs approximately through April 30.¹¹²

Tropical Cyclone Gita, February 2018

Background

Tropical Cyclone Gita, swept by Samoa and American Samoa on February 10, 2018 as a powerful Category 2 storm,¹¹³ causing damages to buildings, widespread power outages and flooding to both Samoa and American Samoa. The storm later passed Niue on 11 February 2018. As a Category 4 cyclone, Gita made its way towards Tonga on February 12, causing widespread damages. Continuing on its path, Gita then affected parts of Fiji on February 13. While Samoa, American Samoa and Fiji all suffered damages, Tonga was the worst affected with one death reported, 33 people injured, and over 2,700 houses damaged in the two worst affected islands of Tongatapu and 'Eua. Around 4,500 people were moved into 108 evacuation centers in Tonga.¹¹⁴ The cyclone in total caused 10,000 new displacements in American Samoa, New Zealand, Samoa and Tonga as a result of evacuations and damages to homes.¹¹⁵

In American Samoa around 4,600 people were displaced after their homes were destroyed. This amounts to roughly around eight percent of the territory's population displaced, or the equivalent of 26 million people in the U.S., according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC).¹¹⁶

A total of 387 homes were reported to have been destroyed due to the storm.¹¹⁷ Additionally, over 1200 homes suffered major damage and about 1,600 suffered minor damage.¹¹⁸ According to American Samoa Department of Commerce estimates, at least 50 percent of the territory's residents faced some level of loss to property.¹¹⁹

The agriculture sector was also affected, with some 3,000 people having their crops damaged, according to American Samoa's agriculture director. A local fruit shortage ensued due to the damage to crops in the territory.¹²⁰ American Samoa Governor Lolo Matalasi Moliga said 2,600 farmers lost their crops for an entire growing season, resulting in US\$13 million in economic damages.¹²¹

Initial estimates put damages caused by the cyclone at nearly US\$7 million worth of damage to government buildings and other infrastructure.¹²² However, according to the "2019 American Samoa Economic Forecast (ASEF)" report, by some estimates, Tropical Storm Gita "caused as much as \$186 million in direct and indirect damages across the territory."¹²³ The American Samoa government later gave a higher estimate, saying that the disaster caused nearly US\$200 million in damages to public and private property.¹²⁴

Governor Moliga made an emergency declaration shortly after the cyclone hit and President Donald

111 About FEMA (PPT), https://naleo.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/NALEO_PI_EmergencyRespMgmt_PPT_Ms.Verde_9.13.19.pdf

112 2020-2021 Tropical Cyclone (TC) Season Outlook, https://www.weather.gov/ppg/tt_3

113 The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale is a 1 to 5 rating based on a hurricane's (also tropical cyclones, typhoons) maximum sustained wind speed. Please see here for more information: Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale, <https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/aboutsshws.php>

114 Tropical Cyclone Gita - Feb 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/disaster/tc-2018-000102-ton>

115 IDMC Mid-Year Figures: Internal Displacement in 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/201809-mid-year-figures.pdf>

116 Ibid.

117 FEMA launches helpline for Asam cyclone aid, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/355379/fema-launches-helpline-for-asam-cyclone-aid>

118 Increase in number of American Samoa houses damaged by Gita, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/353034/increase-in-number-of-american-samoa-houses-damaged-by-gita>

119 U.S. GAO - American Samoa: Economic Trends, Status of the Tuna Canning Industry, and Stakeholders' Views on Minimum Wage Increases, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-20-467>

120 Thousands of people's crops affected by Gita in American Samoa, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/366855/thousands-of-people-s-crops-affected-by-gita-in-american-samoa>

121 Lolo requests the USDA to 'expedite' release of \$18M for nutrition assistance, <https://reliefweb.int/report/american-samoa/lolo-requests-usda-expedite-release-18m-nutrition-assistance>

122 IDMC Mid-Year Figures: Internal Displacement in 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/201809-mid-year-figures.pdf>

123 Tropical Storm Gita has some significant effects on American Samoa's GDP and economic forecast, <https://reliefweb.int/report/american-samoa/tropical-storm-gita-has-some-significant-effects-american-samoas-gdp-and>

124 U.S. GAO - American Samoa: Economic Trends, Status of the Tuna Canning Industry, and Stakeholders' Views on Minimum Wage Increases, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-20-467>

Trump approved and signed a Federal Declaration of Emergency on February 11.^{125, 126} On February 25, Governor Moliga requested a major disaster declaration for the period of February 7-12, 2018. On March 2, 2018, President Trump declared that a major disaster existed in the territory and this declaration made additional assistance available to the territory.¹²⁷

A U.S. President has the authority to declare a major disaster for any natural event that the President determines has caused damage that exceed the capabilities of state and local governments to respond. A major disaster declaration will provide a range of federal assistance programs for individuals and public infrastructure, including funds for emergency and permanent work.¹²⁸

DSCA Operations

U.S. Army Pacific Defense Coordination Element-Hawaii (DCE)

As the storm approached American Samoa, the U.S. Army Pacific Defense Coordination Element-Hawaii (DCE) was activated in anticipation of possible landfall. The DCE supports FEMA in American Samoa, and other U.S. territories in the Pacific, as well as Hawaii. In coordination with FEMA and other governmental agencies, the DCE helps coordinate the appropriate level of DOD support for affected areas.¹²⁹

DCE falls under the 8th Theater Sustainment Command (TSC), operating from Fort Shafter on Oahu. The team is comprised of nine service members and civilians, and can be activated in support of natural or manmade disasters. The DCE enables DSCA operations through coordination of Title 10 forces and resources. “The role of the DCE in an event like this is to coordinate DOD capabilities as requested by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Government of American Samoa,” said Col. Greg Anderson, the Defense Coordinating Officer. “We train on a regular basis with American Samoa Department of Homeland Security, our Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officers (EPLO), U.S. Pacific Command and its service components in the region in order to be ready for this kind of emergency.”¹³⁰

EPLOs are senior Reserve officers (typically O-6 or O-5) who are representatives of one of the Military Departments or Military Services and is trained in DSCA requirements, regulations, and law. The EPLO performs a liaison role in planning and coordinating participation for DSCA.¹³¹

The DCE team activated eight service component EPLOs to support operations in both American Samoa and Honolulu. The Sea EPLO coordinated two flights from the Fleet Logistics Squadron which deployed the majority of FEMA’s Incident Management Assessment Team and Essential Support Function personnel within three days. Air EPLOs coordinated with PACAF and Air Mobility Command for additional flight missions carrying equipment and relief supplies. The DCE also coordinated with the 84th Engineer Battalion, 130th Engineer Brigade for transport of supplies for a third C-17 flight on February 20. One of the first missions was transporting and filling thousands of gallons of water in a 100,000 gallon water tank that was damaged by the storm, in an effort to get it to begin running again.¹³²

U.S. Army Reserve

The presence of U.S. Army Reserve soldiers residing in American Samoa and ready to respond in American Samoa provided a crucial element of Federal government relief efforts for Cyclone Gita. While teams and relief supplies were flown in, teams of service members were already on the ground supporting relief efforts. U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers, took immediate action to aid in the recovery efforts and assisted in transporting supplies and equipment to citizens across the island under the direction of

¹²⁵ Samoa and American Samoa assess Cyclone Gita damage, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/pacific/350104/samoa-and-american-samoa-assess-cyclone-gita-damage>

¹²⁶ President Donald J. Trump Approves American Samoa Emergency Declaration, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trump-approves-american-samoa-emergency-declaration/>

¹²⁷ American Samoa – Tropical Storm Gita, FEMA-4357-DR, <https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/FEMA4357DRAS.pdf>

¹²⁸ Governor Calvo Requests for Major Disaster Declaration, <https://reliefweb.int/report/guam/governor-calvo-requests-major-disaster-declaration>

¹²⁹ Defense Coordination Element- Hawaii Responds to Gita, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1449400/defense-coordination-element-hawaii-responds-to-gita/>

¹³⁰ Defense Coordination Element- Hawaii Responds to Gita, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1449400/defense-coordination-element-hawaii-responds-to-gita/>

¹³¹ Air Force Policy Directive 10-8, 4 June 2018, Operations, Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA), https://static.e-publishing.af.mil/production/1/af_a3/publication/afpd10-8/afpd10-8.pdf

¹³² Defense Coordination Element- Hawaii Responds to Gita, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1449400/defense-coordination-element-hawaii-responds-to-gita/>

FEMA. In total, more than 300 U.S. Army Reservists lived and worked in American Samoa and helped transport FEMA and American Red Cross relief supplies and equipment.¹³³

The Pele U.S. Army Reserve Center, located in the Capital, Pago Pago, is home to Charlie and Bravo Companies with the 100th Infantry Battalion, 442nd Infantry Regiment; Theater Support Group American Samoa Detachment; 962nd Quartermaster (Mortuary Affairs) Company, and the 411th Forward Support Company, all subordinate units of the 9th Mission Support Command (9th MSC) based out of Fort Shafter, Hawaii.¹³⁴ The 9th MSC is a U.S. Army Reserve command under the operational control of U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC) and has a key role in U.S. Indo-Pacific Command's Joint Task Force-Homeland Defense.¹³⁶



U.S. Army Major Ullisses Taymes, Theater Support Group, loads luggage and supplies for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) personnel that have arrived at Pago Pago International Airport to support relief operations for Tropical Storm Gita. The Theaters Support Group is a subordinate unit of 9th Mission Support Command based out of Fort Shafter Flats, Hawaii. (Courtesy photo)

Source: <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1445920/army-reserve-answers-first-call-for-disaster-support-relief-in-american-samoa/>

The 9th MSC is the most ethnically diverse, geographically dispersed command in the U.S. Army Reserve, crossing seven time zones, two U.S. states, two U.S. territories, a commonwealth and two foreign countries...Major subordinate commands include the 303rd Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, 658th Regional Support Group, 322nd Civil Affairs Brigade, U.S. Army Pacific-Support Unit, 3rd Mobilization Support Group, USAR Theater Support Group - Pacific, 4960th Multifunctional Training Brigade, 1984th US Army Hospital, the 302nd Transportation Terminal Battalion, and the famed 100th Battalion/442nd Infantry.¹³⁷

The Pele U.S. Army Reserve center was used as a staging ground for federal agencies. "It's very convenient for federal assets. It has been designated the federal team staging facility for the military personnel part of the federal response they come check in with us and if need be we house them." said Army Lt. Col. Clinton C. Seybold, commander of the American Samoa Detachment.¹³⁸

Like other missions, disaster relief operations benefit from experience garnered from previous response operations. For future disaster preparedness, the Army Reserve of the Pacific has sought opportunities to maintain readiness and as a result of experience gained from previous operations. In December 2019, the Army Reserve of the Pacific, under Brig. Gen. Timothy Connelly, met with American Samoa leaders and local authorities to discuss ways to optimize readiness, be better postured and more efficient in relief operations. Specifically, Brig. Gen. Connelly wanted to request flight line access adjacent to the Pele reserve center as a direct result of lessons learned during the response to Gita¹³⁹

¹³³ Army Reserve One-Star General Visits American Samoa to Enhance Capabilities, https://www.army.mil/article/230952/army_reserve_one_star_general_visits_american_samoa_to_enhance_capabilities

¹³⁴ Readiness of American Samoan Army Reserve Soldiers vital in the Pacific, <https://www.usar.army.mil/News/Article/2037494/readiness-of-american-samoan-army-reserve-soldiers-vital-in-the-pacific/>

¹³⁵ Army Reserve established Pacific stronghold in American Samoa, <https://www.usar.army.mil/News/News-Display/Article/1827056/army-reserve-established-pacific-stronghold-in-american-samoa/>

¹³⁶ Samoa reservists honored for tsunami relief efforts, https://www.army.mil/article/45976/samoa_reservists_honored_for_tsunami_relief_efforts

¹³⁷ Army Reserve Answers Call for Typhoon Yutu Disaster Support Relief, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1678391/army-reserve-answers-call-for-typhoon-yutu-disaster-support-relief/>

¹³⁸ Army Reserve Answers First Call for Disaster Relief in American Samoa, <https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/1446544/army-reserve-answers-first-call-for-disaster-relief-in-american-samoa/>

¹³⁹ Ibid.

"We stay in close step with FEMA and keep our facility and our Soldiers as prepared as we can, within the resources we have available, to provide support to disaster [relief efforts] should it ever occur." "Our operation would be significantly enabled if we were to back an aircraft right up to the reserve center, open up the gate, and with both local airport security and military personnel controlling access, we would be able to offload a forklift, offload those materials and position them immediately inside the reserve center yard where FEMA can have direct access," Connelly said.¹⁴⁰

Although challenges were noted, officials indicated they were open to discussing options to expedite and facilitate relief operations. As a result of the talks, the Theater Support Group, under the 9th MSC, coordinated with the Army Corps of Engineers to develop a design plan.¹⁴¹



PAGO PAGO, American Samoa - 9th Mission Support Command leaders met with Congresswoman's representatives on Dec. 6 to discuss Army Reserve access to the flight line to be optimally postured to support the island in the event of an emergency. Photo By: Maj. Melodie Tafao

Source: <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/Photos/igphoto/2002225514/>

South Pacific Tsunami, September 2009

Background

On September 29, 2009, at 17:48 UTC (6:48 a.m. local time), a magnitude 8.1 earthquake struck 120 miles south-southwest from American Samoa, about 13 kilometers below the seabed, or around midway between American Samoa and Samoa.^{142, 143} The earthquake generated tsunami waves of up to 22 meters (72 feet), killing at least 192 people in the region. Most of the deaths were from Samoa, which had 149 deaths, followed by 34 in American Samoa, and 9 in the northern island of Niuatoputapu, Tonga. The tsunami caused a total of over US\$200 million dollars in economic damages to American Samoa, Samoa and Tonga.¹⁴⁴

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the 2009 disaster caused the largest number of deaths in the U.S. due to a tsunami in the 21st Century.¹⁴⁵ The tsunami also left more than 100 other people injured.¹⁴⁶ Major damages occurred to the coastal areas of American Samoa's main Tutuila Island, where the capital Pago Pago is located, and other islands of American Samoa.¹⁴⁷ The tsunami caused severe damage to homes, businesses, water and electrical infrastructure, and swept cars out to sea. Over 200 homes and businesses were reported completely destroyed.¹⁴⁸ The tsunami also caused major damage to another 308 homes, and caused damage to 2,750 others. A major power plant, the Satala Power Plant, was severely damaged and left inoperable, and one school was also destroyed, with four other schools substantially damaged.^{149, 150} Hundreds were displaced by the tsunami, with some staying in emergency shelters, while many were invited to shelter with family and friends.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² On This Day: 2009 Samoa Islands Tsunami, <https://reliefweb.int/report/samoa/day-2009-samoa-islands-tsunami>

¹⁴³ American Samoa Earthquake and Tsunami, <https://www.doi.gov/emergency/factsheets/american-samoa-earthquake-and-tsunami-damage>

¹⁴⁴ On This Day: 2009 Samoa Islands Tsunami, <https://reliefweb.int/report/samoa/day-2009-samoa-islands-tsunami>

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ U.S. GAO - American Samoa: Economic Trends, Status of the Tuna Canning Industry, and Stakeholders' Views on Minimum Wage Increases, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-20-467>

¹⁴⁷ American Samoa Earthquake and Tsunami, <https://www.doi.gov/emergency/factsheets/american-samoa-earthquake-and-tsunami-damage>

¹⁴⁸ U.S. GAO - American Samoa: Economic Trends, Status of the Tuna Canning Industry, and Stakeholders' Views on Minimum Wage Increases, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-20-467>

¹⁴⁹ FEMA Assistance in American Samoa Questioned, <https://www.hstoday.us/channels/fema/fema-assistance-in-american-samoa-questioned/>

¹⁵⁰ The Tyranny of Distance: How Domestic Lessons can be Applied to Other Nations within the Asia-Pacific, <https://www.cfe-dmha.org/Portals/0/liaison/Liaison-VII-2.pdf>

¹⁵¹ American Samoa Earthquake and Tsunami, <https://www.doi.gov/emergency/factsheets/american-samoa-earthquake-and-tsunami-damage>

Governor Tigiola T.A. Tulafona happened to be visiting Hawaii during the disaster, but was able to request an expedited major disaster declaration from the President with assistance from FEMA personnel. That same day, reportedly within six hours of the event, according to Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) Kenneth Tingman, President Barack Obama granted and declared an expedited Federal Major Disaster Declaration for the territory, making federal disaster funds available.^{152, 153}

Tingman established a Joint Field Office (JFO) where all Federal response and recovery operations were coordinated and assumed operational control of response and recovery operations from FEMA Region IX's Response Coordination Center.¹⁵⁴

In total, the federal government provided over US\$125 million in assistance to American Samoa, including individual assistance grants and debris removal, in response to the disaster.¹⁵⁵

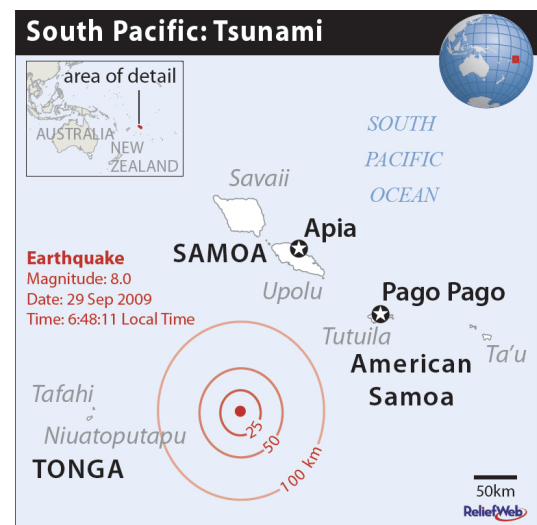
Following the disaster, NOAA provided an interesting explanation as to what occurred. In this region, the Pacific plate subducts westward beneath the Australia plate at the Tonga Trench, one of the most seismically active areas in the world. According to NOAA, tsunami waves were triggered by at least two separate earthquakes occurring within 2–3 minutes of each other near the Tonga Trench, in an extremely rare event known as a “doublet.”¹⁵⁶

According to NOAA, the earthquakes were felt in American Samoa for up to 3 minutes, giving emergency responders, officials, and the public time some to respond. Education efforts held over the summer and fall of that year led to increased knowledge of the threat and warning signs of a tsunami with the general public and many had fortunately created evacuation plans as a result.¹⁵⁷

The first waves reportedly arrived around 17 minutes after the beginning of the earthquake. Although no major impacts were reported, the tsunami reached Hawaii and the West Coast of the continental United States. According to an assessment by NOAA following the tsunami, the “average run-up heights in American Samoa were 2 meters (6½ ft.), but run-up heights of up to 17 meters (56 ft.) were reported by post-event survey teams.”¹⁵⁸

DSCA Operations

When the earthquake and tsunami struck in the South Pacific, USPACOM and humanitarian agencies and organizations across the region were busy responding to multiple emergencies happening nearly simultaneously across the Indo-Pacific region. It should be noted here that while this does not happen often, because the Indo-Pacific is at risk due to multiple natural hazards, especially during the cyclone/typhoon seasons, significant natural disasters can occur around the same time.



29 Sep 2009 - Sixty eight confirmed dead with numbers expecting to rise after a series of tsunamis triggered by an earthquake hit Samoa, American Samoa and northern Tonga. A state of emergency was declared in Niuaotupapu, a state of disaster declared in Samoa and a major disaster declared in American Samoa.

Map Sources: Europa Technologies, Gov't. of USA, UNCS, USGS.
Reference: OCHA. *Samoa Tsunami Situation Report #2*. 30 Sep 2009.
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Map created on 30 Sep 2009 – www.reliefweb.int

Source: ReliefWeb, UNOCHA.

<https://reliefweb.int/map/samoa/south-pacific-tsunami-29-sep-2009-location-map>

¹⁵² American Samoa Earthquake and Tsunami, <https://www.doi.gov/emergency/factsheets/american-samoa-earthquake-and-tsunami-damage>

¹⁵³ American Samoa Earthquake, Tsunami, and Flooding – FEMA-1859- DR, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-09/PDARreport_FEMA-1859-DR-AS.pdf

¹⁵⁴ American Samoa Earthquake and Tsunami, <https://www.doi.gov/emergency/factsheets/american-samoa-earthquake-and-tsunami-damage>

¹⁵⁵ U.S. GAO - American Samoa: Economic Trends, Status of the Tuna Canning Industry, and Stakeholders' Views on Minimum Wage Increases, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-20-467>

¹⁵⁶ On This Day: 2009 Samoa Islands Tsunami, <https://reliefweb.int/report/samoa/day-2009-samoa-islands-tsunami>

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Service Assessment: South Pacific Basin Tsunami – September 29-30, 2009, https://www.weather.gov/media/publications/assessments/tsunami_%20south_pacific10.pdf

The U.S. Department of Defense had just provided support for Typhoon Morakot which hit Taiwan on August 7, when three disasters, Tropical Storm Ketsana in the Philippines, the Padang Earthquakes in Indonesia, and the South Pacific tsunami, occurred within days of each other in late September, impacting the region into October 2009. For Typhoon Morakot, Taiwan requested heavy lift assistance from the U.S. and the U.S. Secretary of Defense directed U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) to assist. For Tropical Storm Ketsana, which hit the Philippines on September 26, the government of the Philippines requested international assistance, while the government of Indonesia also requested assistance a few days later when a 7.6-magnitude earthquake shook Indonesia's West Sumatra on September 30, followed by another 7.0-magnitude earthquake on October 1, 2009.¹⁵⁹

Reports at the time had much of the region's response community, including assisting regional militaries, stretched thin due to Typhoon Morakot and the subsequent "triple disaster." Additionally, on the heels of Ketsana--which went on to also affect Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam--the Philippines was hit by Typhoon Parma just one week later, which caused additional damages to the Philippines. Despite its being called on to support simultaneous multiple relief operations, the DOD assisted in all three relief efforts for the Philippines, Indonesia and American Samoa. As relief operations wound down in American Samoa, U.S. forces remained in the Philippines and Indonesia to continue assisting relief efforts there.¹⁶⁰ Thus, USPACOM, while supporting FEMA for DSCA operations in American Samoa, also simultaneously supported USAID/OFDA with foreign disaster relief in the Philippines and Indonesia.^{161, 162}

Due to the quick granting of the federal disaster declaration, FEMA was able to activate other federal agencies, as well as the military. Although not officially part of the DOD DSCA response, the United States Coast Guard (USCG)¹⁶³ assisted with a USCG C-130, from Coast Guard Air Station Sacramento, California arrived early the next day on September 30th in Pago Pago, carrying officials and initial responders. This included Governor Tulafono, who was visiting Hawaii at the time of the tsunami, the initial response team of 50 personnel including Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO), Kenneth Tingman, and Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO) Col. James George.^{164, 165}

An additional Coast Guard C-130 from Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point, Calif. arrived in American Samoa later that same day carrying additional supplies and FEMA personnel. This included the Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT), and the Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT). The IMAT is a regionally-based incident 'strike team,' while the DMAT is comprised of medical volunteers that are part of the National Disaster Medical System¹⁶⁶

Defense Coordinating Officer and Defense Coordinating Element (DCO/DCE)

The military response for American Samoa consisted of local U.S. Army Reservists, Hawaii National Guard personnel, the Defense Coordinating Officer and Defense Coordinating Element (DCO/DCE), U.S. Army Corps of Engineer personnel (USACE), the USS Ingraham, and USPACOM's Joint Task Force - Homeland Defense (JTF-HD), which supported the response. For domestic disaster relief operations, the DCO/DCE is activated as part of DSCA operations.¹⁶⁷ The DSCA operation was dubbed "Operation Pacific Wave."^{168, 169}

¹⁵⁹ USINDOPACOM Foreign Disaster Response in the Indo-Asia-Pacific June 1991 – June 2019, <https://www.cfe-dmha.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=twmMY081NH8%3d&portalid=0>

¹⁶⁰ Samoa relief winds down; efforts continue elsewhere, <https://reliefweb.int/report/philippines/samoa-relief-winds-down-efforts-continue-elsewhere>

¹⁶¹ USINDOPACOM Foreign Disaster Response in the Indo-Asia-Pacific June 1991 – June 2019, <https://www.cfe-dmha.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=twmMY081NH8%3d&portalid=0>

¹⁶² Improving DoD Support to FEMA's All-Hazards Plans, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1301.html

¹⁶³ The USCG has a unique role: it is part of the Department of Homeland Security during peacetime, but operates under the U.S. Navy during times of war or conflict.

¹⁶⁴ The Tyranny of Distance: How Domestic Lessons can be Applied to Other Nations within the Asia-Pacific, <https://www.cfe-dmha.org/Portals/0/liaison/Liaison-VII-2.pdf>

¹⁶⁵ Fact sheet - American Samoa tsunami response situational overview, 01 Oct 2009, <https://reliefweb.int/report/american-samoa/fact-sheet-american-samoa-tsunami-response-situational-overview-01-oct-2009>

¹⁶⁶ Fact sheet - American Samoa tsunami response situational overview, 01 Oct 2009, <https://reliefweb.int/report/american-samoa/fact-sheet-american-samoa-tsunami-response-situational-overview-01-oct-2009>

¹⁶⁷ The Tyranny of Distance: How Domestic Lessons can be Applied to Other Nations within the Asia-Pacific, <https://www.cfe-dmha.org/Portals/0/liaison/Liaison-VII-2.pdf>

¹⁶⁸ Operation Pacific Wave underway, <https://www.pacaf.af.mil/News/Photos/igphoto/2000465767/>

¹⁶⁹ Samoa reservists honored for tsunami relief efforts, https://www.army.mil/article/45976/samoa_reservists_honored_for_tsunami_relief_efforts

U.S. Army Reservists

In American Samoa, the local U.S. Army Reserve unit had recently returned home from a deployment to Iraq. When the disaster struck, Army reservists were among the first to begin assisting their own community among other local responders, despite many having suffered damages to their own homes, or had houses that were completely destroyed. Roughly one-third of the Soldiers providing disaster relief efforts had homes which had suffered significant damage or had been completely destroyed, said Brig. Gen. Michele G. Compton, commanding general, 9th Mission Support Command.¹⁷⁰

As the first federal responders, Army Reserve Soldiers helped search for survivors, cleared debris and transformed the U.S. Army Reserve Center in American Samoa (Tutuila's only standing federal military installation) into a hub for all military responders. The Soldiers conducted ground assessments and provided needed initial information for the response effort.¹⁷¹

Soldiers supported FEMA missions which included helping the American Red Cross by transporting relief to villages that were the worst affected. Soldiers also provided search and recovery operations, medical care, and conducted debris removal across Tutuila. U.S. Army Reservists from the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry Regiment; the 411th Engineer Battalion's Forward Support Company; the Theater Support Group; and the 127th Chaplain Detachment, under the 9th Mission Support Command (MSC) provided support to DSCA operations. The 9th MSC is a U.S. Army Reserve command under the operational control of U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC).¹⁷²

FCO Kenneth Tingman noted in an article for the Liaison journal that: "Culturally, the distribution of goods is done through the village chief, or Matai. As it turned out, many of the reserve personnel held Matai titles, and they could speak Matai. Using uniformed Matai led to an unprecedented level of transparency for the distribution and made the entire effort run extremely smoothly. The lesson here is that, while use of the military to distribute goods is not a common practice by humanitarians around the world, it is effective in the Pacific, especially among the island nations."¹⁷³

USS Ingraham

On September 30, the U.S. Navy frigate USS Ingraham arrived in American Samoa with food, water, supplies and two Seahawk helicopters available for search and rescue operations. The helicopters were used to allow Governor Tulafono and FCO Tingman to conduct an initial damage survey.¹⁷⁴

National Guard

A Hawaii National Guard C-17 cargo flight from Honolulu arrived in American Samoa early October 1st. The flight was assisted by Hickam active duty airmen. This flight included over 40 National Guard personnel, four vehicles, hazmat materials, communications equipment, cots, blankets, food and water. An additional C-17 cargo flight from Honolulu arrived a few hours later, with 20 additional National Guard personnel, five vehicles, hazmat materials,



Capt. B.J. Itoman, a Hawaii Air National Guard C-17 pilot, goes over paperwork as humanitarian aid supplies from the Federal Emergency Management Agency is loaded by Hawaii Air National Guard, Hawaii National Guard and Hickam Active Duty Airmen into a C-17 Globemaster III bound for American Samoa to assist in the relief efforts underway, Sept 30. The efforts are in the wake of tsunamis triggered by an undersea earthquake, Sept. 29 that has left more than 140 people dead in the South Pacific region. More than 90 Airmen and Soldiers deployed from Hawaii for the humanitarian mission. Photo by Staff Sgt. Mike Meares
Source: <https://www.dvidshub.net/image/208335/tsunami-relief-efforts>

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ The Tyranny of Distance: How Domestic Lessons can be Applied to Other Nations within the Asia-Pacific, <https://www.cfe-dmha.org/Portals/0/Liaison/Liaison-VII-2.pdf>

¹⁷⁴ Fact sheet - American Samoa tsunami response situational overview, 01 Oct 2009, <https://reliefweb.int/report/american-samoa/fact-sheet-american-samoa-tsunami-response-situational-overview-01-oct-2009>

communications equipment, cots, blankets, food and water.¹⁷⁵

A third National Guard C-17 from McChord AFB in Bothell, WA arrived later the same day carrying FEMA and National Guard personnel including National Guard CERF-P Search and Rescue teams, vehicles, trailers and cargo.¹⁷⁶

On October 13, another McChord Air Force Base crew flew a nine-person FEMA team and its telecommunications equipment to American Samoa via C-17 to help re-establish communications. The FEMA team was part of the Seattle-based FEMA Global Emergency Response Support team.¹⁷⁷

The Hawaii Air National Guard's 154th Medical Group team, based at Hickam Air Force Base, arrived in Pago Pago on Oct. 2, and that day processed 117 patients and treated more than 70 injuries. Hawaii Guard members also went to a local village to support search and rescue operations. The medical team was embedded with the chemical, biological, radiological/nuclear and explosives enhanced response force team (CERFP) that was on the first C-17 sent to American Samoa.¹⁷⁸

On October 3, the team along with some sailors from the USS Ingraham, went to the village of Faga'itua northeast of Pago Pago where they administered medical assistance to over 165 people. Four medics were deployed to support the CERFP search and extraction team in western American Samoa.¹⁷⁹

The medical mission wrapped up Oct. 4, but 14 members with the state's civil support team remained to conduct joint hazardous material and damage assessment operations with officials from the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Coast Guard, to form a HAZMAT team to deal with thousands of gallons of fuel, oil and other hazardous materials that were spilled during the disaster.¹⁸⁰ Eleven C-17 cargo-plane missions provided nearly 700,000 pounds of supplies, blankets, electricity generators, vehicles and other relief.¹⁸¹

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in coordination with FEMA, deployed the 249th Engineering Battalion to support emergency power needs for critical public facilities and deployed subject matter experts in debris management, water/wastewater to assist in relief efforts. USACE's Honolulu District, in coordination with FEMA, deployed subject-matter experts that provided engineering expertise to assess and evaluate the damages, and worked with the American Samoa government to assist with repairs.¹⁸²



Tech. Sgt. Kimo McKee, Hawaii Air National Guard loadmaster, directs the loading of humanitarian aid supplies from the Federal Emergency Management Agency by Hawaii Air National Guard, Hawaii National Guard and Hickam Active Duty Airmen into a C-17 Globemaster III bound for American Samoa to assist in the relief efforts underway, Sept 30. Photo by Staff Sgt. Mike Meares.

Source: <https://www.dvidshub.net/image/208339/tsunami-relief-efforts>

¹⁷⁵ Fact sheet - American Samoa tsunami response situational overview, 01 Oct 2009, <https://reliefweb.int/report/american-samoa/fact-sheet-american-samoa-tsunami-response-situational-overview-01-oct-2009>

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ McChord air crew flies FEMA team to American Samoa, <https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/mcchord-air-crew-flies-fema-team-to-american-samoa/281-332855189>

¹⁷⁸ Hawaii Guard medical team returns, civil support team stays in American Samoa, <https://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/118949/hawaii-guard-medical-team-returns-civil-support-team-stays-in-american-samoa/>

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Samoa relief winds down; efforts continue elsewhere, <https://reliefweb.int/report/philippines/samoa-relief-winds-down-efforts-continue-elsewhere>

¹⁸² Fact sheet - American Samoa tsunami response situational overview, 01 Oct 2009, <https://reliefweb.int/report/american-samoa/fact-sheet-american-samoa-tsunami-response-situational-overview-01-oct-2009>

The USACE Honolulu District also established a Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration center (RSOI) at Fort Shafter, Hawaii that coordinated transportation, lodging, training and integration of all Corps responders nationwide deploying to American Samoa. The RSOI also assisted with USACE responders headed to the Philippines and Indonesia.¹⁸³

The Honolulu District engineers also used satellite imagery and reached out to contacts in American Samoa to gather initial damage assessments for shore protection, small boat harbors and flood control projects.¹⁸⁴

Nationwide USACE Planning and Response Teams (Power PRT) and subject-matter experts also provided assistance. The management cell of Honolulu District's Emergency Power PRT joined 15 Soldiers from the 249th Prime Power Engineer Battalion, Company B, based in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, in American Samoa. The team oversaw the installation of FEMA generators at critical public facilities.^{185, 186}

PRTs are essential support for the Emergency Support Function (ESF)-3 of the U.S. national strategy. According to USACE, each of the 43 Corps districts has at least one PRT dedicated to one of the seven ESF-3 response tasks: ice, water, emergency power, debris removal, temporary housing, temporary roofing and structural safety assessment.¹⁸⁷

With the destruction of the Satala power plant, a joint power committee was formed consisting of personnel from American Samoa's emergency management office, FEMA, the American Samoa Power Authority and USACE. According to FCO Tingman, within two weeks, the committee had developed a three-phase approach for restoring power. The second phase called for the placement of 28-megawatt generators at the site of the power plant and was to last for only 18 to 24 months, until a permanent power solution was implemented, however, the phase-two solution, remained operational over five years later, largely due to the efforts of USACE, according to Tingman.¹⁸⁸

Just before mid-October, FEMA announced that response operations concluded and operations were moving to the recovery phase.¹⁸⁹ About two years later, 49 U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers from the 9th Mission Support Command were honored in a Humanitarian Service Medal Award presentation, on Sept. 29, 2011 at the Pele Army Reserve Center in Pago Pago. The Medal is awarded to members of the U.S. military who distinguish themselves "by meritorious participation in a DOD-approved significant military act or operation of a humanitarian nature."¹⁹⁰

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), lies in the Western Pacific Ocean just north of Guam and about 5,500 miles from the U.S. mainland. Part of the Mariana Islands Archipelago, together with Guam to its south, the territory is a chain of 14 islands that runs roughly north-south, spanning roughly 375 miles, with a total land area of 183 square miles. With a population estimated at 50,300 in 2017, more than 48,000 people live on the main southern island of Saipan, the largest island

¹⁸³ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers deploys response teams to American Samoa, <https://www.poh.usace.army.mil/Portals/10/docs/newsreleases/2009/NR20091001.pdf>

¹⁸⁴ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers deploys response teams to American Samoa, <https://www.poh.usace.army.mil/Portals/10/docs/newsreleases/2009/NR20091001.pdf>

¹⁸⁵ 249th Engineer Battalion, <https://www.usace.army.mil/249th-engineer-battalion/>

¹⁸⁶ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers deploys response teams to American Samoa, <https://www.poh.usace.army.mil/Portals/10/docs/newsreleases/2009/NR20091001.pdf>

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ The Tyranny of Distance: How Domestic Lessons can be Applied to Other Nations within the Asia-Pacific, <https://www.cfe-dmha.org/Portals/0/liaison/Liaison-VII-2.pdf>

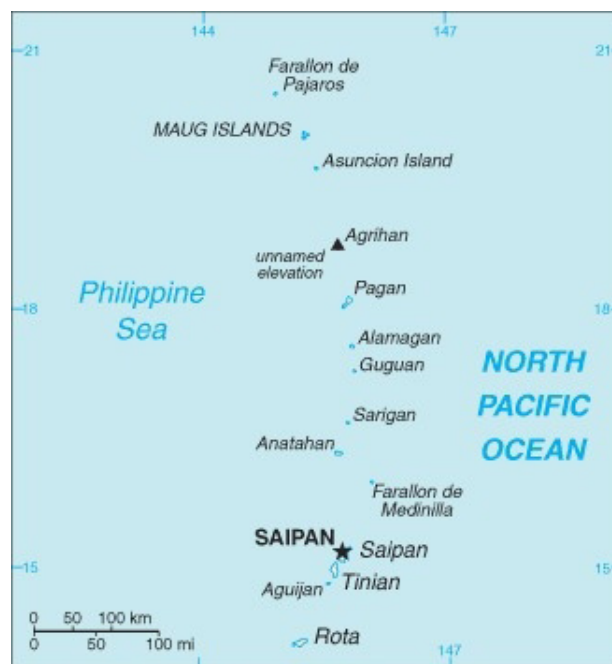
¹⁸⁹ American Samoa Earthquake and Tsunami, <https://www.doi.gov/emergency/factsheets/american-samoa-earthquake-and-tsunami-damage>

¹⁹⁰ Samoa reservists honored for tsunami relief efforts, https://www.army.mil/article/45976/samoa_reservists_honored_for_tsunami_relief_efforts

of the archipelago. Additional residents reside on the other main southern islands of Rota and Tinian. These three southern islands account for 65% of the territory's total land area, 99% of the population and most of the economic activity. The island of Saipan is a roughly 44-square-mile island, located about 135 miles northeast of Guam¹⁹¹ and is the capital and government seat. The northern islands are either uninhabited or lightly populated.^{192, 193, 194}

Significant natural hazard risks for CNMI include: Typhoons, earthquakes, tsunamis, wildfires, landslides/mudslides, volcanoes, and man-made disasters.¹⁹⁵ CNMI is located in "Typhoon Alley," putting the territory at risk for powerful storms on a regular basis. Typhoon season runs from July to January, and CNMI is usually affected by at least one typhoon annually. There are active volcanoes on three of the northern islands: Anatahan, Paga, and Agrihan.¹⁹⁶

The Northwest Pacific is the most active region for tropical cyclones in the world. CNMI is located in an area referred to as "Typhoon Alley", which is a typhoon-susceptible region bounded by Guam, the Philippines and Japan. During the typhoon season, tropical cyclones often form in the central/western regions of the Pacific then track westward across Typhoon Alley as tropical storms or typhoons.¹⁹⁷ Forty-one super typhoons have been recorded in Typhoon Alley between 2000 and 2014, compared to 12 of similar strength in the Atlantic Basin.¹⁹⁸



Map of CNMI

Source: The World Factbook. <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/northern-mariana-islands/map>

Super Typhoon Yutu, October 2018

Background

On October 25, 2018, Super Typhoon Yutu, a Category 5 storm, made a direct hit on CNMI, directly striking Tinian and devastating the southern area of Saipan. Two people were killed by the powerful storm, and hundreds more were injured. More than 3,000 houses were destroyed, and thousands were left homeless.¹⁹⁹

Although Tinian was the worst hit, all three islands in CNMI were affected. The storm packed heavy rains and sustained winds in excess of 180 MPH, downing trees and leaving many roads and public facilities flooded. Homes, businesses and critical infrastructure were damaged and roads were blocked by debris.²⁰⁰ The approximately 2,000 residents of the island of Tinian were left without power and running water.^{201, 202} The storm also damaged critical infrastructure, including severe impacts to utilities

¹⁹¹ Joint Military Response Makes a Difference in Saipan Recovery, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/613653/joint-military-response-makes-a-difference-in-saipan-recovery/>

¹⁹² U.S. TERRITORIES: Public Debt Outlook – 2019 Update, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-19-525>

¹⁹³ Marines Help With Typhoon Relief in Saipan, <https://reliefweb.int/report/northern-mariana-islands-united-states-america/marines-help-typhoon-relief-saipan>

¹⁹⁴ Northern Mariana Islands, <https://www.pacificrisa.org/places/commonwealth-of-the-northern-mariana-islands/>

¹⁹⁵ About FEMA (PPT), https://naleo.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/NALEO_PI_EmergencyRespMgmt_PPT_Ms.Verde_9.13.19.pdf

¹⁹⁶ Northern Mariana Islands, <https://www.pacificrisa.org/places/commonwealth-of-the-northern-mariana-islands/>

¹⁹⁷ Typhoon Season is around the corner: It's time to get ready again, <https://www.andersen.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/416160/typhoon-season-is-around-the-corner-its-time-to-get-ready-again/>

¹⁹⁸ Typhoon Alley: Where the Planet's Most Intense Tropical Cyclones Most Frequently Happen, <https://weather.com/storms/typhoon/news/typhoon-alley-most-powerful-cyclone-earth>

¹⁹⁹ CNMI still on the road to recovery, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/379137/cnmi-still-on-the-road-to-recovery>

²⁰⁰ Super Typhoon Yutu Relief & Recovery Update #4 Post-Declaration Damage Assessment Completed; Relief Manpower on-Island Ready to Support; Feeder 1, Partial 1&2 Back Online, <https://reliefweb.int/report/northern-mariana-islands-united-states-america/super-typhoon-yutu-relief-recovery-update-4>

²⁰¹ 31st MEU Takes the Lead of Joint-service Task Force in Response to Super Typhoon Yutu, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1679486/31st-meu-takes-the-lead-of-joint-service-task-force-in-response-to-super-typhoon/>

²⁰² Commander, Task Force-75 Supports Task Force West in Typhoon Recovery Effort, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1686160/commander-task-force-75-supports-task-force-west-in-typhoon-recovery-effort/>

on Tinian, Saipan and Rota.²⁰³ It was reportedly the worst storm to hit the region since 1968.²⁰⁴ CNMI Governor Ralph Torres described Yutu as: “This is the worst storm anyone in the CNMI has ever seen...”²⁰⁵

Super Typhoon Yutu was not only the strongest recorded typhoon to affect the CNMI, it was the strongest typhoon ever to impact a U.S. Territory and was the second-strongest storm to hit U.S. soil in recorded history, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).^{206, 207} Yutu also struck CNMI as the island of Rota was still recovering from damage caused by Typhoon Mangkhut a month prior earlier (more on Mangkhut in the section below).²⁰⁸

DSCA Operations

Task Force-West (TF-W)

U.S. military service members immediately began deploying on October 25 to assist with relief operations. More than 500 service members from Joint Region Marianas and other units from within USINDOPACOM assigned to Task Force-West (TF-W), a joint task force, provided support to CNMI officials and FEMA. Navy Rear Adm. Shoshana Chatfield, was commander of TF-W. TF-W was initially divided into Task Group Saipan and Task Group Tinian, and was comprised of active duty, reserve, and Guam National Guard service members from more than 20 different units across each service. Service members traveled from Japan, Guam, Hawaii, and the continental U.S. to support the mission.²⁰⁹

According to USINDOPACOM, the Ashland crew, along with 33 other military units, in Joint Region Marianas and other areas in the Indo-Pacific Region, consisting of more than 800 active duty, Reserve, and guard service members from all branches, provided support to Task Force-West to assist in response efforts.^{210, 211}

During the Yutu recovery operations, members of Task Group Saipan worked with Saipan mayor’s staff and the Department of Public Works in clearing roads of debris, collecting more than 12,000 cubic yards of debris. Task Group Saipan also worked with the American Red Cross and volunteers distributing emergency supplies. This joint effort led to providing supplies to 9,223 homes, or over 121,000



SAIPAN, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (Oct. 28, 2018) — Guam-based U.S. Army Reserve soldiers from Echo Company 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry Division, volunteer to distribute relief supplies to island residents affected by Super Typhoon Yutu in Saipan Oct. 28. Service members from Joint Region Marianas and Indo-Pacific Command are providing Department of Defense support to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands’ civil and local officials as part of the FEMA-supported Super Typhoon Yutu recovery effort. (Courtesy photo by JoAnna Delfin)

Source: <https://media.defense.gov/2018/Nov/01/2002058193/-1/-1/0/181028-M-TR604-0008.JPG>

203 2018 PACIFIC DISASTERS: Preliminary Observations on FEMA’s Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-20-614T>

204 Situation Report 1 – period covered: October 24, 2018 - October 25, 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2018%20Typhoon%20Yutu%20Situation%20Report%201.pdf>

205 Marianas Strong: Life After Yutu, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1686177/marianas-strong-life-after-yutu/>

206 2018 PACIFIC DISASTERS: Preliminary Observations on FEMA’s Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-20-614T>

207 Pacific Army Reserve Typhoon Recovery Efforts Put Needs of Community above All Else, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1683795/pacific-army-reserve-typhoon-recovery-efforts-put-needs-of-community-above-all/>

208 2018 PACIFIC DISASTERS: Preliminary Observations on FEMA’s Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-20-614T>

209 Marianas Strong: Life After Yutu, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1686177/marianas-strong-life-after-yutu/>

210 USS Ashland Completes Typhoon Recovery Mission in Northern Mariana Islands, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1696817/uss-ashland-completes-typhoon-recovery-mission-in-northern-mariana-islands/>

211 Guam National Guard Plays Role in Moving Supplies to Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1694339/guam-national-guard-plays-role-in-moving-supplies-to-saipan/>

individual emergency services supplies in total.²¹²

Commander, Navy Expeditionary Forces Command Pacific (CTF-75)

Commander, Navy Expeditionary Forces Command Pacific (also known as Commander, Task Force [CTF] 75) began assisting with DSCA operations supporting TF-W the day after Yutu hit. CTF-75 Guam-based assets, included Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1 (“Seabees”), Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) 5, Navy Cargo Handling Battalion (NCHB) 1 Det. Guam and Coastal Riverine Squadron (CRS) 3.^{213, 214}

CRS-3 used patrol boats to transport military members and supplies and equipment. Members from EODMU-5 used Unmanned Underwater Vehicles to clear the way for the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Sequoia (WLB 215) to enter Saipan and deliver FEMA supplies.²¹⁵

U.S. Navy “Seabees”

A company of U.S. Navy “Seabees” deployed to Tinian to aid in relief efforts. Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 1 (NMCB-1) and NMCB-3, helped repair 184 roofs, installed 196 temporary tents for families whose homes were damaged, produced more than 54,000 gallons of drinking water, cleared debris from 64 miles of road, and cleared 10,036 cubic yards of debris.²¹⁶ NMCB-1 is stationed in Gulf Port, Mississippi and was deployed to Guam at the time.²¹⁷

NMCB-1 Seabees, along with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) and 36th Combat Logistics Battalion (CLB), embarked on the USS Ashland, completed several projects beginning October 29, including purifying and distributing more than 20,000 gallons of water; clearing two public schools, government buildings and the municipal power facility of debris, and restoring emergency services capacity to respond to medical emergencies. The Seabees have assisted in the region since World War II.²¹⁸

USS Ashland/31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (31st MEU)

The amphibious dock landing ship USS Ashland (LSD 48) with embarked Marines from Combat Logistics Battalion (CLB) 31, part of the 31st MEU, arrived in the area on November 3 to provide relief support. Sailors from Naval Beach Unit (NBU) 7 used Landing Craft, Utilities (LCU) to deliver Sailors and Marines along with trucks and supplies, who began assisting delivering relief, and clearing debris and protecting property. Ashland, part of the Wasp Amphibious Ready Group, was forward deployed to Sasebo, Japan, and is assigned to Commander, Amphibious Squadron 11.²¹⁹ In September, Ashland assisted as a refueling station for helicopters during DSCA operations for Typhoon Mangkhut which also struck CNMI and Guam (see following sections for details).²²⁰

More than 150 U.S. service members arrived on the island of Tinian October 29-31 to provide support, led by the 31st MEU Commander, Col. Robert Brodie, and Combat Logistics Battalion 31, led by Lt. Col. Chris Johnson.²²¹ The Ashland delivered the Sailors and Marines, attached to CLB 31, along with 50 vehicles loaded with water, fuel, tents, generators, and air conditioning units to the island of Tinian.²²² In

212 Joint Task Group-Saipan Begins Redeployment of Forces, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1708080/joint-task-group-saipan-begins-redeployment-of-forces/>

213 CTF-75 Supports Task Force West in Joint DSCA Operations After Super Typhoon Yutu, <https://www.c7f.navy.mil/Media/News/Display/Article/1684297/ctf-75-supports-task-force-west-in-joint-dsca-operations-after-super-typhoon-yu/>

214 Commander, Task Force-75 Supports Task Force West in Typhoon Recovery Effort, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1686160/commander-task-force-75-supports-task-force-west-in-typhoon-recovery-effort/>

215 Commander, Task Force-75 Supports Task Force West in Typhoon Recovery Effort, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1686160/commander-task-force-75-supports-task-force-west-in-typhoon-recovery-effort/>

216 Seabees proud to serve people of Tinian as DSCA support comes to close, https://www.militarynews.com/news/seabees-proud-to-serve-people-of-tinian-as-dsca-support-comes-to-close/article_58c30676-2e26-11e9-b45b-1315daabe9fc.html

217 31st MEU Takes the Lead of Joint-service Task Force in Response to Super Typhoon Yutu, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1679486/31st-meu-takes-the-lead-of-joint-service-task-force-in-response-to-super-typhoon/>

218 Commander, Task Force-75 Supports Task Force West in Typhoon Recovery Effort, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1686160/commander-task-force-75-supports-task-force-west-in-typhoon-recovery-effort/>

219 USS Ashland, Combat Logistics Battalion 31 begin DSCA support following Typhoon Yutu, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1682604/uss-ashland-combat-logistics-battalion-31-begin-dsca-support-following-typhoon/>

220 USS Ashland Completes Typhoon Recovery Mission in Northern Mariana Islands, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1696817/uss-ashland-completes-typhoon-recovery-mission-in-northern-mariana-islands/>

221 31st MEU Takes the Lead of Joint-service Task Force in Response to Super Typhoon Yutu, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1679486/31st-meu-takes-the-lead-of-joint-service-task-force-in-response-to-super-typhoon/>

222 USS Ashland Continues FEMA Support to Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1689309/uss-ashland-continues-fema-support-to-commonwealth-of-the-northern-mariana-isla/>

addition, vehicles and equipment were brought to help with clearing debris.²²³

The USS Ashland also went to Guam to transport soldiers and heavy equipment from 9th MSC, Guam Army National Guard to provide support to Saipan.²²⁴ Ashland initially transported 18 vehicles and 22 heavy equipment operators from Guam to Saipan using Landing Craft, Utility (LCU) 1633 and 1634, assigned to Naval Beach Unit (NBU) 7. NBU 7 brought onboard over 20 Soldiers along with 20 10-ton dump trucks and supply vehicles for transport to Saipan. The Ashland crew had the opportunity to work alongside the Guam Army National Guard and the Guam Air National Guard for the first time.²²⁵ It was also the first time equipment from the Guam Army National Guard was transported by ship. Usually the Air Force provides transportation for National Guard equipment and personnel.^{226, 227}

Making multiple movements from Guam, Ashland transported over 160 Sailors, Marines, and Guam Army National Guard Soldiers with more than 95 vehicles carrying 4,800 gallons of water, 5,400 gallons of fuel, tents, generators, and air conditioning units to Tinian and Saipan.²²⁸

On November 17, the USS Ashland worked with the Guam Air National Guard's 254th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers (RED HORSE), to transport additional vehicles and supplies from the Guam Army National Guard to Saipan.²²⁹

In total, Ashland moved over 100 vehicles and 160 Sailors, Marines and Guam Army National Guard Soldiers that helped clear debris from over 150 miles of road and distributed more than 300,000 gallons of drinking water. The military personnel also assisted with building more than 400 emergency tents in Saipan and Tinian.^{230, 231} On November 20, the USS Ashland departed the area after assisting Task Force West.²³²

36th Contingency Response Group (36th CRG)

An eight-man team of Airmen assigned to the 36th Contingency Response Group (CRG), from Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, helped transport cargo at Tinian International Airport. The 36th CRG team utilized two 10K adverse terrain forklifts, a K-loader and an R-11 fuel truck capable of assisting up to four planes a day. The team also assisted with downloading barges and clearing debris from roads.²³³ Before the typhoon struck, the unit was performing FHA operations in Balikpapan and Palu, Indonesia in response to a 7.5-magnitude earthquake and tsunami.²³⁴

Additionally, the 36th CRG contributed to the transportation of 75,000 gallons of bottled water, over 28,000 meals, 1,000 hot meals, and over 490 emergency shelters in support of operations.²³⁵

223 USS Ashland, Combat Logistics Battalion 31 begin DSCA support following Typhoon Yutu, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1682604/uss-ashland-combat-logistics-battalion-31-begin-dsca-support-following-typhoon/>

224 USS Ashland Continues FEMA Support to Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1689309/uss-ashland-continues-fema-support-to-commonwealth-of-the-northern-mariana-isla/>

225 USS Ashland Completes Typhoon Recovery Mission in Northern Mariana Islands, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1696817/uss-ashland-completes-typhoon-recovery-mission-in-northern-mariana-islands/>

226 USS Ashland Continues FEMA Support to Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1689309/uss-ashland-continues-fema-support-to-commonwealth-of-the-northern-mariana-isla/>

227 Guam National Guard, Navy Join Forces for Relief Efforts, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1685142/guam-national-guard-navy-join-forces-for-relief-efforts/>

228 Ashland works with Army, AF, USMC to support CNMI, <https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/News-Stories/Article/2248885/ashland-works-with-army-af-usmc-to-support-cnmi/>

229 Guam National Guard Plays Role in Moving Supplies to Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1694339/guam-national-guard-plays-role-in-moving-supplies-to-saipan/>

230 USS Ashland Completes Typhoon Recovery Mission in Northern Mariana Islands, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1696817/uss-ashland-completes-typhoon-recovery-mission-in-northern-mariana-islands/>

231 Guam National Guard Plays Role in Moving Supplies to Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1694339/guam-national-guard-plays-role-in-moving-supplies-to-saipan/>

232 USS Ashland Completes Typhoon Recovery Mission in Northern Mariana Islands, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1696817/uss-ashland-completes-typhoon-recovery-mission-in-northern-mariana-islands/>

233 36th Contingency Response Group Continues Super Typhoon Yutu Recovery Efforts in Tinian, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1699303/36th-contingency-response-group-continues-super-typhoon-yutu-recovery-efforts-i/>

234 36th Contingency Response Group Brings Relief, Inspiration after Devastation, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1699018/36th-contingency-response-group-brings-relief-inspiration-after-devastation/>

235 36th Contingency Response Group Continues Super Typhoon Yutu Recovery Efforts in Tinian, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1699303/36th-contingency-response-group-continues-super-typhoon-yutu-recovery-efforts-i/>

In support of both the DSCA operation in CNMI and the FDR operation in Indonesia, since beginning operations on October 5, the 36th CRG managed airlift for 211 sorties, 1,427 passengers, and partnered with 14 countries to transport 702 displaced people. The group also offloaded and downloaded 15 million pounds of relief supplies for the USAID and FEMA missions as of November 27.²³⁶

The 36th CRG leads cross-functional forces incorporating more than 30 different jobs into one team “providing initial Air Force presence to potentially austere forward operation locations as directed by commander Pacific Air Force. It is a rapid-deployment unit designed at the initiative of Air Force leadership to be a ‘first-in’ force to secure an airfield and establish and maintain airfield operations. The 36th CRG is comprised of the 36th Mobility Response Squadron, the 554th Red Horse Squadron, the 644th Combat Communications Squadron and the 736th Security Forces Squadron.”^{237, 238}

In November of 2013 the 36th CRG deployed to the Philippines for typhoon relief efforts and in April of 2015, to Nepal for earthquake recovery. The 36th CRG unloaded 80 aircraft in the Philippines and more than 200 in Nepal.²³⁹

Guam National Guard

Approximately 140 Guam Guardsmen assisted on Saipan for approximately two months. The Army Guard's 1224th Engineer Support Company assisted with recovery efforts to include support of debris clearing missions, and working with Naval Beach Unit (NBU) 7 to load heavy equipment vehicles onto the USS Ashland for transport to Saipan.^{240, 241}

The 254th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers (RED HORSE), from the Guam Air National Guard, worked with the USS Ashland to transport vehicles and supplies from the Guam Army National Guard to Saipan by both sea and air November 17.²⁴²

Guam National Guard sent 22 heavy equipment operators to Saipan, along with the vehicles to provide the capability to be able to move and clean up large amounts of debris.²⁴³

9th Mission Support Command (9th MSC)

On Oct. 30, the 9th Mission Support Command, U.S. Army Reserve, mobilized some 300 Soldiers from Guam, the CNMI and the Pacific area to begin transporting FEMA and American Red Cross supplies and equipment. The U.S. Army Reserve also provided its Saipan facilities as a staging area.²⁴⁴ Brig. Gen. Doug Anderson, was the commanding general, 9th Mission Support Command.²⁴⁵ Lt. Col. Bryan Klatt, was the deputy commander for all U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers in the Marianas and also the commander for Theater Support Group - Detachment Marianas, 9th MSC.²⁴⁶

Prior to the mobilization announcement, approximately 140 Army Reserve Soldiers volunteered to support relief operations. Over 500 U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers lived and worked in Guam and CNMI.²⁴⁷

236 36th Contingency Response Group Brings Relief, Inspiration after Devastation, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1699018/36th-contingency-response-group-brings-relief-inspiration-after-devastation/>

237 36th Contingency Response Group Continues Super Typhoon Yutu Recovery Efforts In Tinian, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1699303/36th-contingency-response-group-continues-super-typhoon-yutu-recovery-efforts-i/>

238 36th Contingency Response Group Brings Relief, Inspiration after Devastation, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1699018/36th-contingency-response-group-brings-relief-inspiration-after-devastation/>

239 Guam Contingency Response Group Assists in Typhoon Recovery, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/613516/guam-contingency-response-group-assists-in-typhoon-recovery/>

240 Guam National Guard, Navy Join Forces for Relief Efforts, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1685142/guam-national-guard-navy-join-forces-for-relief-efforts/>

241 Super Typhoon Yutu Relief & Recovery Update #4 Post-Declaration Damage Assessment Completed; Relief Manpower on-Island Ready to Support; Feeder 1, Partial 1&2 Back Online, <https://reliefweb.int/report/northern-mariana-islands-united-states-america/super-typhoon-yutu-relief-recovery-update-4>

242 Guam National Guard Plays Role in Moving Supplies to Saipan, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1694339/guam-national-guard-plays-role-in-moving-supplies-to-saipan/>

243 Guam National Guard, Navy Join Forces for Relief Efforts, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1685142/guam-national-guard-navy-join-forces-for-relief-efforts/>

244 Army Reserve Answers Call for Typhoon Yutu Disaster Support Relief, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1678391/army-reserve-answers-call-for-typhoon-yutu-disaster-support-relief/>

245 Ibid.

246 Pacific Army Reserve Typhoon Recovery Efforts Put Needs of Community above All Else, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1683795/pacific-army-reserve-typhoon-recovery-efforts-put-needs-of-community-above-all/>

247 Army Reserve Answers Call for Typhoon Yutu Disaster Support Relief, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1678391/army-reserve-answers-call-for-typhoon-yutu-disaster-support-relief/>

The 9th MSC supported reception of DOD personnel arriving and departing the airport and seaport, unloaded and loaded supplies, and assisted with distribution of relief. About 50 Soldiers with Echo Company, 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry Regiment led by the Saipan Mayor's Office, started clearing debris from the central part of the island and worked their way to the worst-affected southern part of Saipan.²⁴⁸

Additionally, the 9th MSC assisted FEMA and the local government with emergency tent set up. The Army's 797th Engineer Company (Vertical), helped set up tents for the displaced, implementing a Temporary Emergency Tent and Roofing Installation Support program with officials. The tent setup was led by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFEMS). DFEMS trained the Soldiers on how to assemble the tents, as well as tent accessories such as portable cooking stoves and toilets. The FEMA tents weigh 570 pounds and take about 30 minutes to set up.²⁴⁹

Another joint civil-military team conducted individual house assessments. The team included local government officials, FEMA personnel and Soldiers from the 9th MSC, the 254th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers, Guam Air National Guard and the Guam-based 36th Civil Engineer Squadron Airmen, U.S. Air Force. The assessments determined whether a house could be repaired by military engineers in a two-day timeframe or would otherwise have to be contracted through FEMA for repairs.²⁵⁰

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

The Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), first partnered with local agencies and FEMA to conduct an assessment of critical gaps of material and supplies to determine the best way to support the relief efforts.²⁵¹ USACE also supported local officials to help restore initial power. The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. (CUC) with the help of USACE, Guam Power Authority, Colorado Primary Source, the Department of Energy, and FEMA, was able to restore initial power to some areas just four days after Yutu made landfall.²⁵²

Temporary classrooms were also built by FEMA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Hopwood Middle School and Northern Marianas College were able to utilize temporary classrooms built by the DOD and FEMA.^{253, 254}

U.S. service members began re-deploying back home on November 28-29 after a little over one month deployment. Close to 100 Soldiers with the 9th MSC, U.S. Army Reserve, and Air Force Airmen with the



TINIAN, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands - Builder Construction man Austin Heagle, assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 1, instructs a local Tinian official on how to properly set up a FEMA-provided tent, which will be given out to families whose homes were damaged during Super Typhoon Yutu, Nov. 3, 2018. Service members from Joint Region Marianas and Indo-Pacific Command are providing Department of Defense support to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' civil and local officials as part of the FEMA-supported Super Typhoon Yutu recovery efforts. Photo By: (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Matthew R. White)

Source: <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/Photos/igphoto/2002060209/>

248 Pacific Army Reserve Typhoon Recovery Efforts Put Needs of Community above All Else, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1683795/pacific-army-reserve-typhoon-recovery-efforts-put-needs-of-community-above-all/>

249 Service Members Build Tent Systems for Yutu Survivors, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1692989/service-members-build-tent-systems-for-yutu-survivors/>

250 Ibid.

251 31st MEU Takes the Lead of Joint-service Task Force in Response to Super Typhoon Yutu, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1679486/31st-meu-takes-the-lead-of-joint-service-task-force-in-response-to-super-typhoon/>

252 Super Typhoon Yutu Relief & Recovery Update #4 Post-Declaration Damage Assessment Completed; Relief Manpower on-Island Ready to Support; Feeder 1, Partial 1&2 Back Online, <https://reliefweb.int/report/northern-mariana-islands-united-states-america/super-typhoon-yutu-relief-recovery-update-4>

253 CNMI community college gets big federal grant for Yutu relief, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/406352/cnmi-community-college-gets-big-federal-grant-for-yutu-relief>

254 Normalcy being restored to CNMI after Yutu, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/pacific/382869/normalcy-being-restored-to-cnmi-after-yutu>

36th Civil Engineer Squadron, Andersen Air Force Base, currently assigned to Joint Task Group-Saipan, Task Force-West, redeployed from Saipan back to their homes.²⁵⁵

Joint Task Group Engineer, a contingent of Task Force west, arrived in Saipan, CNMI, in early January and started working on providing temporary metal roofing to damaged homes. Engineers from the Army, Navy and Air Force completed more than 560 temporary metal roofing on homes in Saipan and Tinian, working more than 65,000 hours. During the little more than a month-long recovery mission, engineers staged, distributed and used more than 7,600 pieces of lumber and more than 230,000 square feet of tin. The focus for Task Group Engineers was the installation of temporary roofs. The engineers handed over recovery efforts to FEMA to continue recovery and rebuilding in Saipan and Tinian.²⁵⁶

Service members from Joint Task Force West officially concluded Super Typhoon Yutu relief and recovery efforts in Saipan and Tinian February 6-7, 2019.²⁵⁷ Tinian Mayor Edwin Aldan at a closing event February 7, involving civilian and military dignitaries, offered thanks to the Seabees and Engineers for their efforts.²⁵⁸ With the close of DOD support to DSCA, FEMA and civilian authorities continued to provide support to essential services on Tinian and Saipan.

Typhoon Mangkhut, September 2018

Background

Typhoon Mangkhut hit CNMI as a Category 2 typhoon on September 10, 2018, affecting all three main islands, however CNMI's southernmost island of Rota suffered the worst of the damages, with the storm passing directly overhead. Three hundred and forty families on Rota had their homes damaged, according to the CNMI Red Cross.²⁵⁹ While the eye of the storm passed over Rota, the typhoon affected all three main islands of CNMI with sustained winds of up to over 100 miles per hour (160 kilometers per hour).^{260, 261} Mangkhut also caused damages on Guam (which will be discussed in the next section under Guam).

Rota bore the brunt of Typhoon Mangkhut with the storm dumping up to 10 inches (255 mm) of rain and winds of over 139 miles per hour (223 kilometers an hour) were recorded hitting the southernmost island. Over 600 people reportedly sought shelter in evacuation centers during the storm.^{262, 263} As the storm left the area, it intensified in strength, with sustained winds of 175 mph as it headed towards the Philippines.^{264, 265}

Typhoon Mangkhut was the strongest storm to hit the island since 2002. Rota's main village of Songsong suffered widespread damage. The storm toppled trees, and caused power poles and transformers to fall across the island's roads. The governor of CNMI, Ralph Torres, made a request to U.S. President Donald Trump to declare an emergency, and the U.S. government declared a state of disaster emergency in the CNMI, allowing the territory to receive federal assistance and for FEMA to begin coordinating relief efforts.^{266, 267}

²⁵⁵ Joint Task Group-Saipan Begins Redeployment of Forces, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1708080/joint-task-group-saipan-begins-redeployment-of-forces/>

²⁵⁶ DoD Successfully Completes Yutu Relief Mission in Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1754290/dod-successfully-completes-yutu-relief-mission-in-commonwealth-of-the-northern/>

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Seabees proud to serve people of Tinian as DSCA support comes to close, https://www.militarynews.com/news/seabees-proud-to-serve-people-of-tinian-as-dsca-support-comes-to-close/article_58c30676-2e26-11e9-b45b-1315daabe9fc.html

²⁵⁹ 340 homes damaged on CNMI's Rota - Red Cross, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/367331/340-homes-damaged-on-cnmi-s-rot-red-cross>

²⁶⁰ Homes in Rota damaged but not destroyed - CNMI Red Cross, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/pacific/366430/homes-in-rot-damaged-but-not-destroyed-cnmi-red-cross>

²⁶¹ Wasp ESG Assessing Damage to Guam, Northern Marianas from Typhoon Mangkhut, <https://news.usni.org/2018/09/12/36483>

²⁶² Typhoon-hit CNMI asks US for emergency declaration, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/366146/typhoon-hit-cnmi-asks-us-for-emergency-declaration>

²⁶³ Guam cleans up after Mangkhut, Hawaii and Norfolk brace for Olivia and Florence, <https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2018/09/11/guam-cleans-up-after-mangkhut-hawaii-and-norfolk-brace-for-olivia-and-florence/>

²⁶⁴ Wasp ESG Assessing Damage to Guam, Northern Marianas from Typhoon Mangkhut, <https://news.usni.org/2018/09/12/36483>

²⁶⁵ Wasp ESG Completes Typhoon Assistance to Northern Marianas, Guam, <https://news.usni.org/2018/09/14/36565>

²⁶⁶ Rota in shambles after Typhoon Mangkhut, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/366287/rota-in-shambles-after-typhoon-mangkhut>

²⁶⁷ Wasp ESG Assessing Damage to Guam, Northern Marianas from Typhoon Mangkhut, <https://news.usni.org/2018/09/12/36483>

DSCA Operations

When Mangkhut hit, 51 sailors and Marines were already ashore on Tinian, preparing for the upcoming Valiant Shield exercise, according to U.S. 7th Fleet. They provided immediate assistance clearing debris once the storm passed.²⁶⁸ The DOD stood up a Defense Coordination Office and worked with the CNMI Joint Information Center to monitor, assess and plan for possible requests.²⁶⁹

USS Wasp Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) and 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (31st MEU)

Commander, Task Force (CTF) 76 supported DSCA activities in CNMI. Two ships within CTF 76, the amphibious assault ship USS Wasp (LHD 1) and the amphibious dock landing ship USS Ashland (LSD 48), supported FEMA.²⁷⁰ The two ships are part of the Wasp Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) and includes embarked Marines from the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). The forward-deployed Wasp operates with 7th Fleet out of Sasebo, Japan.²⁷¹

Commander, CTF 76, U.S. 7th Fleet Rear Adm. Brad Cooper, along with commanding officer, 31st MEU, Col. Robert Brodie, and Lt. Col. Christopher Johnson, commander of Combat Logistics Battalion 31, met and worked alongside Ralph Torres, the governor of CNMI, to coordinate relief.²⁷²

The Wasp ESG assisted FEMA and local civilian authorities with initial assessment operations in CNMI (as well as Guam). Navy and Marine Corps aircraft from the ESG began aerial surveys of the islands of Rota, Saipan and Tinian, while ESG leadership met with local leaders and FEMA to assess priorities. The Wasp ESG surveyed possible sites for its landing craft to operate at in order to move equipment and personnel to the islands. Aerial surveys were conducted by MH-60S Sea Hawk helicopters assigned to the “Island Knights” of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 25 and MV-22 Ospreys assigned to Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 262 were used to assess possible landing sites and to bring teams to shore to conduct ground surveys. The Wasp ESG and 31st MEU also began delivering water and other relief supplies to the islands.^{273, 274}

Ground surveys were conducted by Sailors from Naval Beach Unit (NBU) 7, who were flown ashore to assess damage caused by the typhoon.²⁷⁵ USS Ashland assisted as a refueling station for helicopters, assigned to the “Island Knights.”^{276, 277, 278}

From Sept. 9 to 14, the 31st MEU and Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON) 11, embarked aboard the USS Wasp and USS Ashland, provided air support. MV-22B Osprey tiltrotor aircraft and CH-53E Super Stallion helicopters with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 262 (Reinforced), and MH-60S Seahawk helicopters with Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 completed 63 sorties that facilitated over 550 personnel transfers and delivery of around 29,465 lbs. of cargo including drinking water in support of FEMA, and local authorities, throughout CNMI and Guam.^{279, 280}

Battalion Landing Team, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, and Combat Logistics Battalion 31 supported by sending more than 100 Marines and Sailors to assist with debris removal from roads and provided logistical help throughout Rota. The troops cleared roadways using chainsaws and axes along nine miles

268 Wasp ESG Completes Typhoon Assistance to Northern Marianas, Guam, <https://news.usni.org/2018/09/14/36565>

269 Wasp Expeditionary Strike Group Begins DSCA Operations in Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1630040/wasp-expeditionary-strike-group-begins-dsca-operations-in-commonwealth-of-the-n/>

270 Wasp Expeditionary Strike Group Provides Air Support to CNMI Recovery Efforts, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1634110/wasp-expeditionary-strike-group-provides-air-support-to-cnmi-recovery-efforts/>

271 Wasp ESG Completes Typhoon Assistance to Northern Marianas, Guam, <https://news.usni.org/2018/09/14/36565>

272 Guam cleans up after Mangkhut, Hawaii and Norfolk brace for Olivia and Florence, <https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2018/09/11/guam-cleans-up-after-mangkhut-hawaii-and-norfolk-brace-for-olivia-and-florence/>

273 Wasp ESG Assessing Damage to Guam, Northern Marianas from Typhoon Mangkhut, <https://news.usni.org/2018/09/12/36483>

274 Wasp Expeditionary Strike Group Begins DSCA Operations in Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1630040/wasp-expeditionary-strike-group-begins-dsca-operations-in-commonwealth-of-the-n/>

275 Ibid.

276 USS Ashland Completes Typhoon Recovery Mission in Northern Mariana Islands, <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1696817/uss-ashland-completes-typhoon-recovery-mission-in-northern-mariana-islands/>

277 Wasp Expeditionary Strike Group Provides Air Support to CNMI Recovery Efforts, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1634110/wasp-expeditionary-strike-group-provides-air-support-to-cnmi-recovery-efforts/>

278 Navy Assists Typhoon Mangkhut Recovery Efforts in Marianas, Guam, <https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/1633362/navy-assists-typhoon-mangkhut-recovery-efforts-in-marianas-guam>

279 Marine Units Complete Support to Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands following Typhoon Mangkhut, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1636462/marine-units-complete-support-to-guam-and-the-commonwealth-of-the-northern-mari/>

280 Wasp ESG Completes Typhoon Assistance to Northern Marianas, Guam, <https://news.usni.org/2018/09/14/36565>

of the island's main road.²⁸¹

Additional supplies were ferried in from the USS Ronald Reagan (CVN-76). The guided-missile cruiser USS Antietam (CG-54) from the Reagan Carrier Strike Group, served as a floating refueling point for helicopters transiting between the islands.²⁸²

On September 14, Marine Corps Col. Robert Brodie, commanding officer of the 31st MEU, marked the conclusion of 31st MEU and Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON) 11 relief efforts during a wreath-laying ceremony at the Corporal Joe Junior G. Charfauros Veterans Memorial Park in Rota.²⁸³

The USS Wasp and crew was no stranger to providing disaster relief. In September 2017, USS Wasp had provided disaster assistance to the U.S. Virgin Islands following Hurricane Irma. The Wasp was in the process of moving to its new homeport in Sasebo, Japan, when it was called upon to spend about two months to support relief efforts in the Caribbean.²⁸⁴

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Honolulu District activated its Emergency Operation Center (EOC) Sept. 6, 2018, in support of the response to Typhoon Mangkhut as well as for Hurricane/Tropical Storm Olivia that was heading towards the eastern Hawaiian Islands. USACE had more than 100 personnel engaged and coordinating with local, state and FEMA partners.²⁸⁵

USACE deployed 24 personnel to the Pacific including a Team Leader, Assistant Team Leader, a debris removal subject matter expert (SME), an electrical power SME, a company from the 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power) and a Power Planning and Response Team (Power PRT). Under the Regional Activation Mission assignment, the personnel provided Emergency Support Function 3 (Engineering & Public Works Support) assistance.²⁸⁶



ROTA, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands - Personnel with the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) and U.S. service members from the Coast Guard and Navy depart. Personnel from FEMA were surveying damage caused by Typhoon Mangkhut and a contingent of U.S. military personnel remained on the island to clear debris. Service members from Indo-Pacific Command were providing Department of Defense support to FEMA and working with Guam and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' civil and local officials for typhoon recovery efforts. Photo By: Staff Sgt. Scott Schmidt

Source: <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/Photos/igphoto/2001966353/>

281 Marine Units Complete Support to Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands following Typhoon Mangkhut, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1636462/marine-units-complete-support-to-guam-and-the-commonwealth-of-the-northern-mari/>

282 Wasp ESG Completes Typhoon Assistance to Northern Marianas, Guam, <https://news.usni.org/2018/09/14/36565>

283 Marine Units Complete Support to Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands following Typhoon Mangkhut, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1636462/marine-units-complete-support-to-guam-and-the-commonwealth-of-the-northern-mari/>

284 Wasp ESG Assessing Damage to Guam, Northern Marianas from Typhoon Mangkhut, <https://news.usni.org/2018/09/12/36483>

285 Honolulu District Activates Emergency Operation Center, Response Teams for Storms, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1629992/honolulu-district-activates-emergency-operation-center-response-teams-for-storms/>

286 Honolulu District Activates Emergency Operation Center, Response Teams for Storms, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1629992/honolulu-district-activates-emergency-operation-center-response-teams-for-storms/>

Typhoon Soudelor, August 2015

Background

On August 2-3, 2015, powerful Category 2 Typhoon Soudelor hit CNMI, passing directly over Saipan, which absorbed the brunt of the storm. Though the typhoon was compact, at 14 miles across, it made a direct hit on the roughly 44-square mile main island of Saipan.^{287, 288} Soudelor struck Saipan with sustained winds of around 105 miles per hour (mph), and estimated 120-mph gusts, damaging homes and infrastructure, and causing widespread flooding and an oil spill at the port.²⁸⁹ The typhoon forced the closure of the airport and left the estimated 50,000 residents and tourists without power, water, food and fuel shortages. Wind speeds were measured at 214 mph at one location in Saipan.^{290, 291, 292, 293} The island was left without power for weeks, as the storm damaged the local power plant.²⁹⁴ Although Saipan was worst-hit, Soudelor also affected Guam (discussed below).

It was reportedly Saipan's first direct typhoon strike since 1968. CNMI acting governor Ralph Torres declared a "state of major disaster and significant emergency" after Soudelor struck.²⁹⁵ U.S. President Barack Obama issued a major disaster declaration on August 5, 2015 for CNMI, quickly approving the request of the CNMI government to declare the CNMI a federal disaster area, making federal assistance available.²⁹⁶ The declaration led FEMA to begin coordinating the USG response and FEMA called upon DOD assets for support after local, state and non-DOD assets were used.²⁹⁷ At the time, the CNMI government estimated the recovery cost to be at least US\$20 million.²⁹⁸

Fortunately, no deaths were reported from Soudelor, however, about 40 people were reported injured according to the CNMI government.²⁹⁹ Around 545 people were displaced, according to the Red Cross.



SAIPAN HARBOR, Saipan (August 8, 2015) - Vehicles from the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) are unloaded from the well deck of the amphibious dock landing ship USS Ashland (LSD 48) via Landing Craft Utility vehicle during disaster relief efforts in Saipan after Typhoon Soudelor made landfall. Ashland is assigned to the Bonhomme Richard Expeditionary Strike Group and is on patrol in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations. Photo By: MC3 David Cox

Source: <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/Photos/igphoto/2001270973/>

287 Disaster declaration: Obama OKs Saipan aid request, <https://reliefweb.int/report/northern-mariana-islands-united-states-america/disaster-declaration-obama-oks-saipan-aid>

288 Maritime Preposition Ships Squadron 3 Joins Typhoon Relief in Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/615242/maritime-preposition-ships-squadron-3-joins-typhoon-relief-in-saipan/>

289 Delta Company Linemen Power Restoration of Electricity on Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/616482/delta-company-linemen-power-restoration-of-electricity-on-saipan/>

290 CNMI Response to Typhoon Soudelor, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/TyphoonSoudelor_SITREP_B_0.pdf

291 Saipan residents shocked by devastation of Typhoon, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/280514/saipan-residents-shocked-by-devastation-of-typhoon>

292 AHA Centre Flash Update - Typhoon Soudelor (7 August 2015), <https://reliefweb.int/report/china-taiwan-province/aha-centre-flash-update-typhoon-soudelor-7-august-2015>

293 Joint Military Response Makes a Difference in Saipan Recovery, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/613653/joint-military-response-makes-a-difference-in-saipan-recovery/>

294 Typhoon Soudelor becomes world's most powerful storm as it trashes through Northern Marianas, <https://reliefweb.int/report/northern-mariana-islands-united-states-america/typhoon-soudelor-becomes-worlds-most-powerful>

295 Ibid.

296 President Obama approves additional recovery aid for Saipan following devastating Typhoon Soudelor, <https://reliefweb.int/report/northern-mariana-islands-united-states-america/president-obama-approves-additional-recovery>

297 Army Divers Partner with Coast Guard in Support of Saipan Recovery, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/615585/army-divers-partner-with-coast-guard-in-support-of-saipan-recovery/>

298 Disaster declaration: Obama OKs Saipan aid request, <https://reliefweb.int/report/northern-mariana-islands-united-states-america/disaster-declaration-obama-oks-saipan-aid>

299 Disaster declaration: Obama OKs Saipan aid request, <https://reliefweb.int/report/northern-mariana-islands-united-states-america/disaster-declaration-obama-oks-saipan-aid>

Additionally, at least 1,500 people were given emergency food assistance.^{300, 301}

The powerful typhoon left major damages in its wake, tearing roofs off houses and leaving residents without power, water and wastewater services. The American Red Cross (ARC) in Saipan said the storm caused the worst damage to the Pacific island territory in 30 years, leaving many roads impassable. The ARC also said that it was the fourth storm to affect the territory in two months, catching residents off guard with its strength.^{302, 303}

After the storm the Commonwealth Utility Corporation (CUC), the local electrical power utility said all 14,622 electric customers on Saipan were without power and later assessments confirmed nearly 800 power poles and 600 transformers were damaged.³⁰⁴

After battering Saipan, Soudelor intensified into a Category 5 Super Typhoon and developed into 2015's most powerful storm as it headed west away from CNMI. Soudelor was stronger than Cyclone Pam, which badly affected Vanuatu, and was considered the previous strongest storm of the year.^{305, 306}

DSCA Operations

The U.S. Coast Guard, although not part of DOD efforts, transported U.S. military members and response officials to Saipan on August 5. As part of the initial federal assessment team, the Coast Guard Cutter Sequoia transported 14 members from the U.S. Army National Guard, nine members from Mobil's disaster and spill response team, one U.S. Marshal, and one CUC staff member.³⁰⁷ The Coast Guard also assessed Saipan's shipping channel and port and cleared debris in Tanapag harbor to help clear the way for relief efforts.^{308, 309}

USS Ashland and 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (31st MEU)

The amphibious ship USS Ashland (LSD 48) happened to be in the region conducting training with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) embarked and immediately headed to Saipan to assist with the response after Soudelor hit.³¹⁰ The Ashland and 31st MEU arrived August 9. The Ashland was part of the forward-deployed Bonhomme Richard Amphibious Ready Group.^{311, 312} The Marines and sailors were rerouted with orders to assist recovery operations Aug. 5.

The USS Ashland arrived on August 7 and began distributing relief supplies in Saipan. Personnel transported supplies and relief equipment with two separate trips from Guam.³¹³ Four MV-22B Ospreys with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 265 (Reinforced), 31st MEU, were staged in Guam to provide aerial lift support.^{314, 315}

Making at least two trips from Guam, the USS Ashland transported additional FEMA supplies, comprised of

300 Typhoon Soudelor becomes world's most powerful storm as it trashes through Northern Marianas, <https://reliefweb.int/report/northern-mariana-islands-united-states-america/typhoon-soudelor-becomes-worlds-most-powerful>

301 Saipan residents shocked by devastation of Typhoon, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/280514/saipan-residents-shocked-by-devastation-of-typhoon>

302 Typhoon Soudelor becomes world's most powerful storm as it trashes through Northern Marianas, <https://reliefweb.int/report/northern-mariana-islands-united-states-america/typhoon-soudelor-becomes-worlds-most-powerful>

303 Saipan residents shocked by devastation of Typhoon, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/280514/saipan-residents-shocked-by-devastation-of-typhoon>

304 USACE deploys to support Typhoon Soudelor relief efforts, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/613411/usace-deploys-to-support-typhoon-soudelor-relief-efforts/>

305 Typhoon Soudelor becomes world's most powerful storm as it trashes through Northern Marianas, <https://reliefweb.int/report/northern-mariana-islands-united-states-america/typhoon-soudelor-becomes-worlds-most-powerful>

306 CNMI Response to Typhoon Soudelor, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/TyphoonSoudelor_SITREP_B_0.pdf

307 Joint Military Response Makes a Difference in Saipan Recovery, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/613653/joint-military-response-makes-a-difference-in-saipan-recovery/>

308 Joint Mission Almost Complete on Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/613995/joint-mission-almost-complete-on-saipan/>

309 Joint Military Response Makes a Difference in Saipan Recovery, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/613653/joint-military-response-makes-a-difference-in-saipan-recovery/>

310 Joint Military Response Makes a Difference in Saipan Recovery, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/613653/joint-military-response-makes-a-difference-in-saipan-recovery/>

311 Joint Mission Almost Complete on Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/613995/joint-mission-almost-complete-on-saipan/>

312 Marines Help With Typhoon Relief in Saipan, <https://reliefweb.int/report/northern-mariana-islands-united-states-america/marines-help-typhoon-relief-saipan>

313 Joint Mission Almost Complete on Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/613995/joint-mission-almost-complete-on-saipan/>

314 Marines Deliver Supplies, Clear Debris for Saipan Typhoon Relief, <https://reliefweb.int/report/northern-mariana-islands-united-states-america/marines-deliver-supplies-clear-debris-saipan>

315 Joint Military Response Makes a Difference in Saipan Recovery, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/613653/joint-military-response-makes-a-difference-in-saipan-recovery/>

generators, as well as food, drinking water, tents, and heavy equipment needed to move larger generators and heavy Guam Power Authority equipment. This also included 10,000 pounds of relief supplies from the Red Cross.^{316, 317} FEMA loaded onto Ashland 89 pallets of drinking water, with each pallet being equivalent to 900 liters and two pallets of water jugs.³¹⁸

Led by Rear Admiral Bette Bolivar, commander of Joint Region Marianas, Marines delivered more than 16,600 gallons of water and 47,000 individual meals provided by FEMA to five distribution sites across Saipan. Marines distributed 98,000 gallons of potable water, of which 68,000 gallons were purified utilizing a transportable desalinization plant (Light Water Purification System and a Tactical Water Purification System). Marines and sailors also cleared debris from Marianas High School.^{319, 320} The water was taken to 14 community centers to in turn be distributed to neighboring areas.³²¹ In total, the military team provided more than 200,000 gallons of water to the people of Saipan.³²²

U.S. Army Reserve

The 9th Mission Support Command's Tanapag United States Army Reserve Center was used by FEMA as an operations center and staging area for generators, communications systems, and relief supplies. Approximately 100 Army Reservists of the 9th MSC lived and served in Saipan and could immediately assist with relief efforts. Two Pacific Army Reserve Emergency Procedure Liaison Officers also assisted with emergency response coordination.³²³

36th Contingency Response Group (36th CRG)

On August 9, six Airmen assigned to the 36th Contingency Response Group (CRG) who were Air Transportation Specialists or "port dogs," stationed at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, arrived to support the unloading of FEMA-contracted cargo aircraft at the Saipan International Airport. The CRG's unique forklifts were designed for large cargo planes and the CRG crew used these to unload more than 500,000 pounds of relief supplies and cargo.^{324, 325, 326}

Assisted by units from Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, to increase cargo movement capability, the teams provided two Tunnor 60K Aircraft Cargo Loaders, which provide high-lift support to reach aircraft that the local airport did not have capacity for, and military-grade, adverse-terrain fork lifts capable of lifting 10,000 lbs.³²⁷ A U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III from Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam delivered one K-loader, two forklifts and other logistic equipment.³²⁸

Earlier that year in 2015, the CRG had supported international earthquake recovery efforts in Nepal--after a powerful 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck in April--where the CRG unloaded more than 200 aircraft.³²⁹

316 CNMI, Red Cross and FEMA Announce Enhanced Aid for Typhoon Soudelor Survivors, <https://reliefweb.int/report/northern-mariana-islands-united-states-america/cnmi-red-cross-and-fema-announce-enhanced-aid>

317 Marines Help With Typhoon Relief in Saipan, <https://reliefweb.int/report/northern-mariana-islands-united-states-america/marines-help-typhoon-relief-saipan>

318 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, Ashland Transport Water into Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/613105/31st-marine-expeditionary-unit-ashland-transport-water-into-saipan/>

319 Marines Deliver Supplies, Clear Debris for Saipan Typhoon Relief, <https://reliefweb.int/report/northern-mariana-islands-united-states-america/marines-deliver-supplies-clear-debris-saipan>

320 Joint Military Response Makes a Difference in Saipan Recovery, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/613653/joint-military-response-makes-a-difference-in-saipan-recovery/>

321 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, Ashland Transport Water into Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/613105/31st-marine-expeditionary-unit-ashland-transport-water-into-saipan/>

322 Joint Mission Almost Complete on Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/613995/joint-mission-almost-complete-on-saipan/>

323 Joint Military Response Makes a Difference in Saipan Recovery, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/613653/joint-military-response-makes-a-difference-in-saipan-recovery/>

324 Ibid.

325 Joint Mission Almost Complete on Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/613995/joint-mission-almost-complete-on-saipan/>

326 Guam Contingency Response Group Assists in Typhoon Recovery, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/613516/guam-contingency-response-group-assists-in-typhoon-recovery/>

327 Helping Home: Saipan Airman Aids Native Island during Typhoon Recovery, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/613987/helping-home-saipan-airman-aids-native-island-during-typhoon-recovery/>

328 Joint Military Response Makes a Difference in Saipan Recovery, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/613653/joint-military-response-makes-a-difference-in-saipan-recovery/>

329 Helping Home: Saipan Airman Aids Native Island during Typhoon Recovery, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/613987/helping-home-saipan-airman-aids-native-island-during-typhoon-recovery/>

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) specialized Power PRT from the Honolulu District worked with Delta Company of the U.S. Army 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power) and local agencies to conduct engineering assessments of public works facilities. The team also worked to install emergency generators at water wells and other critical facilities.³³⁰ Prior to Soudelor's landfall, USACE had already begun mobilizing and pre-positioning personnel from the Power PRT, along with Soldiers from the 249th Engineer Battalion.³³¹

The 249th Engineer Battalion is a versatile power generation battalion assigned to USACE that provides commercial-level power during operations.³³² The Pacific Ocean Division at Fort Shafter, Hawaii, which oversees the Honolulu District, coordinated the USACE emergency response with FEMA.³³³

"Prepositioning of personnel greatly contributed to the Corps' immediate response," said Brig. Gen. Jeffrey L. Milhorn, who is the Commanding General for USACE Pacific Ocean Division. "While our Honolulu District is up front executing our mission in Saipan, teammates from across nearly all of the Corps' nine divisions are deployed or virtually engaged in this important humanitarian assistance mission," said Milhorn. "The Corps has a tremendous capability to quickly mobilize personnel and pull together technical expertise and other resources from across the country to carry out our response missions."³³⁴

Emergency response personnel and technical subject matter experts for temporary power and debris management, contracting, logistics, and communication functions from Headquarters USACE; Pacific Ocean; Great Lakes and Ohio River; Mississippi Valley; North Atlantic; Northwestern; South Atlantic; South Pacific; Southwestern divisions worked together to support Saipan.³³⁵

USACE support of FEMA included deployment of the Power PRT from the Honolulu District, Advanced Contracting Initiative (ACI) assets, resources from 249th Prime Power's Alpha and Delta Companies, and debris subject matter experts (SMEs) who conducted rapid assessments of critical infrastructure.³³⁶

Alpha Company, 249th Engineer Battalion, is located at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. It is comprised of a company headquarters and four prime power platoons. Delta Company, is comprised of all Reserve Soldiers and has its headquarters and three platoons at Cranston, Rhode Island, and one platoon at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. Each line company is capable of setting up, operating, and repairing medium voltage power generation and distribution systems across the globe.³³⁷

A nine-man group from the 249th's Delta Company deployed to Saipan to assist with the repair of the port lighting system and to install electrical wiring on utility poles. Delta Company worked closely with the CUC to restore power and water systems with the assistance of local and federal partners. FEMA's federal coordinating officer on Saipan, Stephen DeBlasio, said this was the first time he had seen FEMA utilize the 249th Engineer Battalion.³³⁸

Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadron (MPSRON) 3

A small fleet of ships with Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadron (MPSRON) 3, part of Military Sealift Command (MSC), also assisted in relief efforts by supporting delivery of water and ice. Operating in the Western Pacific, MPSRON 3 normally anchors four or five ships off Saipan as part of a group of 12 ships

³³⁰ Joint Military Response Makes a Difference in Saipan Recovery, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/613653/joint-military-response-makes-a-difference-in-saipan-recovery/>

³³¹ USACE deploys to support Typhoon Soudelor relief efforts, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/613411/usace-deploys-to-support-typhoon-soudelor-relief-efforts/>

³³² Delta Company Linemen Power Restoration of Electricity on Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/616482/delta-company-linemen-power-restoration-of-electricity-on-saipan/>

³³³ USACE deploys to support Typhoon Soudelor relief efforts, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/613411/usace-deploys-to-support-typhoon-soudelor-relief-efforts/>

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ Delta Company Linemen Power Restoration of Electricity on Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/616482/delta-company-linemen-power-restoration-of-electricity-on-saipan/>

³³⁶ Delta Company Linemen Power Restoration of Electricity on Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/616482/delta-company-linemen-power-restoration-of-electricity-on-saipan/>

³³⁷ Ibid.

³³⁸ Ibid.

carrying afloat prepositioned U.S. military cargo, providing heavy equipment and supplies for military forces supporting operations in the Pacific.³³⁹

The crews of USNS Charlton, USNS Soderman (T-AKR 317) and USNS Dahl (T-AKR 312) supplied the residents of Saipan with fresh water and ice. These ships have the capability to create upwards of 20,000 gallons of potable water per ship per day. Supplies were also transported from Guam to Saipan on the USNS Dahl. Additionally, a 14-crew party from the USNS PFC Dewayne T. Williams (T-AK 3009) went ashore to help with repairs at the Brilliant Star Montessori School.³⁴⁰

7th Engineer Dive Detachment

On August 27, in support of relief efforts, the Hawaii-based 7th Engineer Dive Detachment, 130th Engineer Brigade, 8th Theater Sustainment Command partnered with the Coast Guard's 14th District for a port assessment and certification of Tanapag Harbor. The 7th Dive Detachment is the only Army dive detachment in the Pacific. The detachment has the capability to conduct initial ground assessments, recertification of ports, structural assessments and requested repairs.³⁴¹

Captain Troy Davidson, 7th Dive commander, said the detachment worked alongside airmen from Hickam Air Force Base for the transportation of personnel and equipment. The MV MAJ Bernard F. Fisher (T-AK 4396), part of MPSRON 3, also assisted the Dive Detachment, leaving Guam on August 21 to transport the group from Guam to Saipan.^{342, 343}

On August 18, 2015 a joint local government official, FEMA, and U.S. military press conference was held to announce the departure of assisting U.S. military forces from Saipan. Among the other means of support, in total, the military team provided more than 200,000 gallons of water and 47,000 meals to Saipan. Following the departure, FEMA, the Red Cross, and the local government continued relief and recovery efforts.³⁴⁴



SAIPAN, Northern Mariana Islands (Aug. 22, 2015) - Rear Adm. Bette Bolivar, commander of Joint Region Marianas, speaks with Saipan media during a press conference with Steve DeBlasio, the federal coordinating officer for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Lt. Gov. Ralph Torres and Lt. Col. Eric Malinowski, liaison for 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit. The press conference addressed the military's involvement in disaster relief efforts in Saipan after Typhoon Soudelor and to announce the departure of the Navy and Marine Corps teams from the island, as the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Red Cross, and local government takeover relief efforts. Photo By: MC3 Kristina D. Marshall

Source: <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/Photos/igphoto/2001274945/>

³³⁹ Maritime Preposition Ships Squadron 3 Joins Typhoon Relief in Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/615242/maritime-preposition-ships-squadron-3-joins-typhoon-relief-in-saipan/>

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

³⁴¹ Army Divers Partner with Coast Guard in Support of Saipan Recovery, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/615585/army-divers-partner-with-coast-guard-in-support-of-saipan-recovery/>

³⁴² Army Divers Partner with Coast Guard in Support of Saipan Recovery, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/615585/army-divers-partner-with-coast-guard-in-support-of-saipan-recovery/>

³⁴³ Maritime Preposition Ships Squadron 3 Joins Typhoon Relief in Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/Article/615242/maritime-preposition-ships-squadron-3-joins-typhoon-relief-in-saipan/>

³⁴⁴ Joint Mission Almost Complete on Saipan, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/613995/joint-mission-almost-complete-on-saipan/>

Guam

Located in the Western Pacific, is located about 3,700 miles west of Hawaii, and 50 miles south of the southernmost island of CNMI, and has a total land area of 212 square miles. Guam has an estimated population of 162,500 (2017). The primary industries of Guam are tourism and defense. Military bases cover about 30 percent of the island (2017). Most of the service members are attached to U.S. Naval Base Guam or Andersen Air Force Base, the two major military bases on the island.³⁴⁵

Significant natural hazard risks for Guam include: Typhoons, earthquakes, tsunamis, wildfires, landslides/mudslides, and man-made disasters.³⁴⁶ Like CNMI, Guam is also located in “Typhoon Alley,” a typhoon-susceptible region bounded by Guam, the Philippines and Japan, which puts the territory at risk for powerful storms on a regular basis. A typical typhoon season for Guam runs from late June through December, with the peak occurring between late August through mid-November.³⁴⁷



Map of Guam

Source: *The World Factbook*. <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/guam/map>

The Northwest Pacific is the most active region for tropical cyclone activity. CNMI is situated in an area referred to as “Typhoon Alley”, which is a typhoon-susceptible region bounded by Guam, the Philippines and Japan. During the typhoon season, tropical cyclones often form in the central/western regions of the Pacific then track westward across Typhoon Alley as tropical storms or typhoons.³⁴⁸

Typhoon Mangkhut, September 2018

Background

On September 10, 2018, Typhoon Mangkhut battered CNMI, just north of Guam, directly passing over the island of Rota. Although the eye of the storm did not pass over Guam, the island still reportedly experienced hurricane-force winds, causing widespread flooding and power outages in Guam.^{349, 350} More than 2,000 people in Guam stayed in emergency shelters overnight as the typhoon passed close to the island.³⁵¹ The powerful typhoon damaged or destroyed homes on the island, particularly in northern Guam, damaged the power infrastructure, disrupted water services, and caused agricultural damages. Around 80 percent of Guam was without power, the Pacific Daily News reported.³⁵² Because of the damages, Guam Governor Eddie Baza Calvo on September 25 sent a letter to President Donald Trump, requesting for a major disaster declaration, to provide for federal assistance.³⁵³ President Trump approved the disaster declaration for Guam and on October 3, FEMA announced that federal disaster

³⁴⁵ U.S. TERRITORIES: Public Debt Outlook – 2019 Update, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-19-525>

³⁴⁶ About FEMA (PPT), https://naleo.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/NALEO_PI_EmergencyRespMgmt_PPT_Ms.Verde_9.13.19.pdf

³⁴⁷ Typhoon Season is around the corner: It's time to get ready again, <https://www.andersen.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/416160/typhoon-season-is-around-the-corner-its-time-to-get-ready-again/>

³⁴⁸ Typhoon Season is around the corner: It's time to get ready again, <https://www.andersen.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/416160/typhoon-season-is-around-the-corner-its-time-to-get-ready-again/>

³⁴⁹ Philippines, Hong Kong Brace for Super Typhoon Mangkhut, <https://reliefweb.int/report/philippines/philippines-hong-kong-brace-super-typhoon-mangkhut>

³⁵⁰ Wasp ESG Assessing Damage to Guam, Northern Marianas from Typhoon Mangkhut, <https://news.usni.org/2018/09/12/36483>

³⁵¹ Guam's US congresswoman asks Trump for help with typhoon fallout, <https://www.mnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/366374/guam-s-us-congresswoman-asks-trump-for-help-with-typhoon-fallout>

³⁵² Guam cleans up after Mangkhut, Hawaii and Norfolk brace for Olivia and Florence, <https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2018/09/11/guam-cleans-up-after-mangkhut-hawaii-and-norfolk-brace-for-olivia-and-florence/>

³⁵³ Governor Calvo Requests for Major Disaster Declaration, <https://reliefweb.int/report/guam/governor-calvo-requests-major-disaster-declaration>

assistance was made available to Guam to supplement the territory's recovery efforts.³⁵⁴

DSCA Operations

Ahead of the typhoon, USACE Honolulu District requested key assets from USACE headquarters to forward deploy to Guam for potential response. A Power PRT from USACE's Walla Walla District, a debris removal SME, and an ESF 3 Regional Activation Team, deployed to Guam to support response efforts.³⁵⁵

Military units happened to be in the region prepping for the upcoming Valiant Shield 2018 (VS-18) exercise. After Typhoon Mangkhut struck, VS-18, set to take place on Guam and around CNMI, was postponed so that military forces could assist with relief support. The units based out of Guam that were slated to participate, as well as visiting units for the exercise, quickly pivoted from the exercise to a real-world DSCA mission. More than 3,000 personnel were dispatched to assist with relief activities.³⁵⁶

Valiant Shield is a U.S. only, biennial field training exercise that began in 2006. After providing support in the wake of Typhoon Mangkhut, U.S. military forces eventually participated in and wrapped up exercise VS-18 on September 23rd. Participants included the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), 15 surface ships, more than 160 aircraft and approximately 15,000 personnel.³⁵⁷

USS WASP Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG)

On September 12, the USS Wasp Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG), with the embarked 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, began providing air assistance to FEMA and local officials in Guam and CNMI and assisted in the assessment of typhoon damage to Guam and CNMI.³⁵⁸ Following the aerial surveys, aircraft were put on standby to assist in any future operations, including an MH-60S Sea Hawk helicopter assigned to Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 and MV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft assigned to Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 262.³⁵⁹

"The MEU assembled teams on board in order to provide water support on the island and generators for the local population if necessary" said Marine Corps 1st Lt. Cameron Field, the combat cargo team embarkation officer. "We also had company-sized teams of Marines ready to assist with debris clean-up at a moment's notice."³⁶⁰

The U.S. Coast Guard Sector Guam and patrol boats from Coast Guard Station Apra Harbor also began



GUAM (Sept. 9, 2018) - Marines and Sailors of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) and Sailors with the amphibious assault ship USS Wasp (LHD 1) take off aboard an MV-22 Osprey to conduct surveys on the islands of Guam and Saipan as part of the Humanitarian Assistance Survey Team, off the coast of Guam. The 31st MEU and the ships of the Wasp Expeditionary Strike Group are assisting local government and the Federal Emergency Management Agency with distributing emergency relief supplies after the island was struck by Typhoon Mangkhut, September 10. The 31st MEU, the Marine Corps' only continuously forward-deployed MEU, provides a flexible force ready to perform a wide-range of military operations. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Alexis B. Betances)

Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/34975434@N08/44571135362/>

354 President Donald J. Trump Approves Major Disaster Declaration for Territory of Guam, <https://reliefweb.int/report/guam/president-donald-j-trump-approves-major-disaster-declaration-territory-guam>

355 Honolulu District Activates Emergency Operation Center, Response Teams for Storms, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1629992/honolulu-district-activates-emergency-operation-center-response-teams-for-storms/>

356 Indo-Pacom Wraps Up Valiant Shield 2018, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1644882/indo-pacom-wraps-up-valiant-shield-2018/>

357 Ibid.

358 Wasp ESG Assessing Damage to Guam, Northern Marianas from Typhoon Mangkhut, <https://news.usni.org/2018/09/12/36483>

359 Navy Assists Typhoon Mangkhut Recovery Efforts in Marianas, Guam, <https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/1633362/navy-assists-typhoon-mangkhut-recovery-efforts-in-marianas-guam/source/GovDelivery/>

360 Ibid.

making assessments and clearing debris from the port so that it could reopen while DOD and other federal teams headed to CNMI to assess the situation. Additionally, Marines and sailors with the 31st MEU and the Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON) 11 embarked aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Wasp and dock landing ship USS Ashland began distributing emergency supplies on Guam alongside FEMA and local government officials.^{361, 362, 363, 364}

Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group

Additional supplies were ferried in from the USS Ronald Reagan (CVN-76). According to the 7th Fleet, the guided-missile cruiser USS Antietam (CG-54) from the Reagan Carrier Strike Group, served as a floating refueling point for helicopters moving between the islands.³⁶⁵

From Sept. 9 to 14, the 31st MEU and Amphibious Squadron 11 (PHIBRON 11), provided air support. In total, since Sept. 11, MV-22B Osprey tiltrotor aircraft and CH-53E Super Stallion helicopters with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 262 (Reinforced), and MH-60S Seahawk helicopters with Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 completed 63 sorties, transported 550 personnel, and delivered around 29,465 lbs. of relief supplies in support of FEMA and local authorities, in Guam and CNMI.^{366, 367}

On September 14, Marine Corps Col. Robert Brodie, commanding officer of the 31st MEU, attended a wreath-laying ceremony at the Corporal Joe Junior G. Charfauros Veterans Memorial Park in Rota, with local officials. The observance also marked the conclusion of 31st MEU and (PHIBRON) 11 relief efforts during DSCA to federal agencies, local officials, and the people of Guam and CNMI.³⁶⁸

Conclusion

Although perhaps not as common or well-known as Foreign Disaster Relief (FDR) operations in the Indo-Pacific, Defense Support of Civil Authorities, or DSCA, for natural disaster response, is a key mission for the DOD in the USINDOPACOM AOR. A review of DSCA operations in the Indo-Pacific over recent years shows that typhoons/tropical cyclones are the most common natural disasters the DOD has responded to. This of course is largely due to the way the U.S. Pacific territories are geographically situated in the region and the natural hazards they are exposed to, especially for Guam and CNMI, which face annual threats of severe typhoons, due to their unfortunate location in the region's infamous Typhoon Alley. American Samoa is at risk as well, being exposed to annual tropical cyclones and, as witnessed over a decade ago, the territory faced one of its worst natural disasters--a destructive earthquake and tsunami--much as many other countries in the region have experienced and are exposed to.

A similar situation exists in the Atlantic, where USNORTHCOM often finds itself providing relief support to civil authorities in the aftermath of hurricanes that have affected U.S. territories in the Caribbean. As well as potentially providing relief support to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands through DSCA missions, USNORTHCOM will often have to deal with the effects of some Atlantic hurricanes as they make their eventual way along the eastern coast or make landfall on the continental U.S., and provide support through DSCA operations.

361 Guam cleans up after Mangkhut, Hawaii and Norfolk brace for Olivia and Florence, <https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2018/09/11/guam-cleans-up-after-mangkhut-hawaii-and-norfolk-brace-for-olivia-and-florence/>

362 Wasp ESG Assessing Damage to Guam, Northern Marianas from Typhoon Mangkhut, <https://news.usni.org/2018/09/12/36483>

363 Coast Guard Assessing Storm Damage in Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Following Typhoon Mangkhut, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1627910/coast-guard-assessing-storm-damage-in-guam-commonwealth-of-the-northern-mariana/>

364 Marine Units Complete Support to Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands following Typhoon Mangkhut, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1636462/marine-units-complete-support-to-guam-and-the-commonwealth-of-the-northern-mari/>

365 Wasp ESG Completes Typhoon Assistance to Northern Marianas, Guam, <https://news.usni.org/2018/09/14/36565>

366 Marine Units Complete Support to Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands following Typhoon Mangkhut, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1636462/marine-units-complete-support-to-guam-and-the-commonwealth-of-the-northern-mari/>

367 Wasp ESG Completes Typhoon Assistance to Northern Marianas, Guam, <https://news.usni.org/2018/09/14/36565>

368 Marine Units Complete Support to Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands following Typhoon Mangkhut, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1636462/marine-units-complete-support-to-guam-and-the-commonwealth-of-the-northern-mari/>

Due to the risk of natural hazards throughout the Indo-Pacific, it is an unfortunate likelihood then that U.S. military members in USINDOPACOM (and perhaps USNORTHCOM) may be called upon to support a disaster relief operation through FDR or DSCA missions in support of USAID/BHA or FEMA. For U.S. military personnel in USINDOPACOM, this type of mission has to be carried out in a very culturally and geographically diverse AOR that is spread across long distances, making operations challenging for all federal agencies involved in disaster relief efforts, including of course, the DOD.

However, this also is an opportunity for DOD to provide robust and needed support to federal partners, civil authorities and affected local populations in a myriad of ways, including logistical support, transport of relief and response personnel, communications, medical personnel and supplies, etc. in an effort to save lives and alleviate suffering. Having military personnel already on the ground, whether or not they lived or worked there, and having other forces present in the region during exercises or routine patrol certainly helped alleviate the so-called “Tyranny of Distance,” and provided a quick and needed response in many instances. Each military service was crucially involved in providing relief, and the numerous military units involved each lent their own expertise, experience and equipment to disaster response efforts.

Tropical Cyclone Gita, Super Typhoon Yutu, Typhoon Mangkhut, Typhoon Soudelor, and the earthquake and tsunami were major disaster events that quickly overwhelmed the capabilities of local territorial governments, spurring requests for emergency declarations and assistance from the federal government. To complicate matters in the region, due to proximity, CNMI and Guam are at risk and have been affected at the same time by some disasters requiring assistance for both territories, such as the case with Typhoon Mangkhut. Despite these unique challenges, the DSCA process allowed the DOD to quickly provide support to CNMI, Guam as well as American Samoa, under the lead of FEMA. This made available military assets that filled gaps in the response and augmented the civilian-led USG relief effort, providing much-needed unique equipment that was not available to local officials, large capacity military transport, surveillance capabilities, specialized engineering expertise, experienced personnel and emergency relief supplies for each response operation.

The DSCA process is reviewed and updated over time, particularly in DOD plans for DSCA support, FEMA and national plans, as well as through some exercises. Continued review and planning involving all USG stakeholders, including federal and local personnel, will help equip planners and responders with knowledge of DSCA processes and procedures and the broad range of DSCA resources available through the DOD. Examination and assessment of DSCA operations on a regular basis will help develop lessons learned and best practices for domestic disaster response, leading to a more comprehensive DSCA strategy for the DOD and other federal agencies.

Questions for Discussion

1. *How does the U.S. military support FEMA during a natural disaster response?*
2. *What are some of the major differences between DOD support for FDR and DSCA?*
3. *What is the difference between FEMA and USAID/BHA as far as natural disaster response? Who responds where?*
4. *Can you think of other U.S. agencies that might become involved in a DSCA response?*
5. *What is the importance of inter-agency cooperation?*
6. *How could DOD support to natural disasters be improved? Is there anything from the responses to the natural disasters for the U.S territories you saw that could be enhanced?*
7. *What are some of the lessons learned and best practices from DSCA operations in the Pacific Territories?*
8. *How can U.S. military members prepare for providing support to U.S. territories and states vs. providing support overseas?*
9. *Having a basic understanding of DSCA is key to smooth planning and response efforts. What is your major takeaway from the aforementioned DSCA operations?*
10. *How can DOD improve its support to FEMA and other U.S. agencies that may lead a response?*



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