

REMOTE RESPONSES

PIO & LOFR lessons learned

November 2023

CDG
COUP D'OEIL GROUP

HURRICANE MARIA: THE CHALLENGE

Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico, and the nearest response elements were more 1,000 miles away in Florida. Three million people in Puerto Rico were left without power, communication and the basic necessities. Meanwhile, 5 million stateside were scrambling to get information their family and friends on the island. In the background, spills and hazardous material releases were rampant.



HURRICANE MARIA: THE RESPONSE

Forward Deploy: Who ever is first sending imagery becomes the initial primary source. Response personnel must capture imagery and be able to get released to the public. Response crews and local stakeholders can be tapped to support imagery of operations.

Targeted Social Media: Social media response posts targeted areas with the highest concentration of Stateside Puerto Ricans.

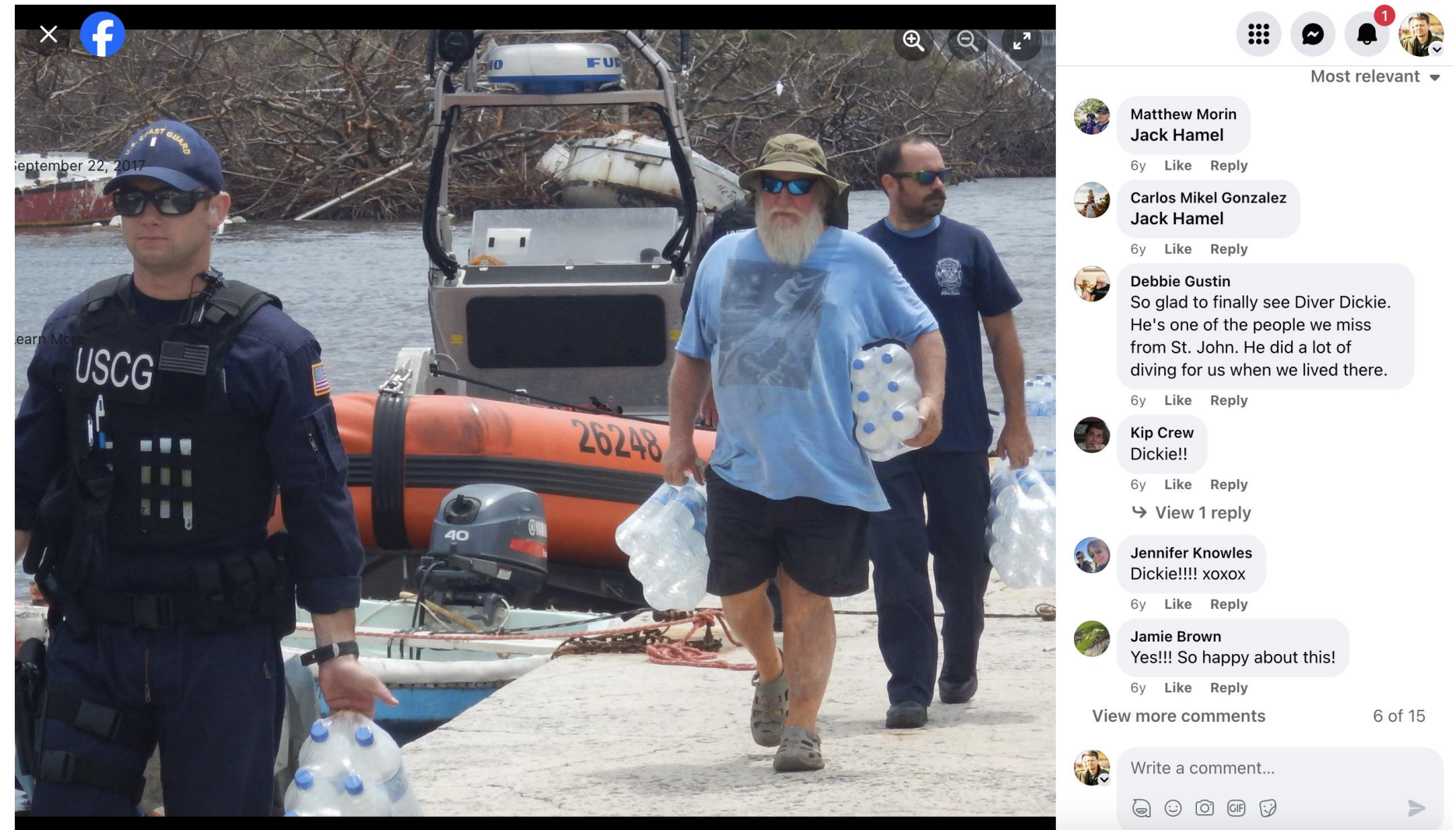
Social Inputs: Members of the public outside the effected area provided information to first responders through social media. People inside the effected area were cut off.

Rumor Control: Social media misinformation was rampant. People trying to find information about their family and friends overwhelmed command centers and hotlines. Social media specialists hunted for patient zero of misinformation.

HURRICANE MARIA: THE RESULTS

The response was able to:

1. Learn about the communities impacted to better tailor messaging and engagement.
2. Create beacons of information through imagery and social media.
3. Target communities based on their capabilities.
4. Build credibility through lifesaving operations.
4. Facilitate the two-way flow of information between the public and the response.



REMOTE FOOD PLANT: THE CHALLENGE

During the COVID 19 Pandemic, a food plant in an extremely remote area of the Midwest, was addressing the pandemic.

By this time, food plants were becoming hot spots featured on the news.

At this location, plant workers spoke 37 different languages. Translators were not available for a number of languages.

In addition to plant workers, the communication needs to stakeholder groups had to be met.



REMOTE FOOD PLANT: THE RESPONSE

Inside Imagery & Information: Tell your story with imagery. Don't leave anything to the imagination. If critics are focusing in on small specifics go wide with the lens. Look for ways to show information in a transparent manner.

Engage Stakeholders: There are existing engagement patterns in communities. Leverage that don't fight against it: Tribal/Community leaders. areas of gathering

Language Considerations: Ensure you have ways to communicate with all stakeholders even if it is rudimentary: Signs with no languages and pictographs.

Physical Visuals: Look for high traffic areas or ways to engage communities directly. Even consider flying banners and HAM radio operators.

Appearance is reality to the larger narrative: The public will quickly spot gaps like inadequate care to locals if needed.

REMOTE FOOD PLANT: THE RESULTS

The Company was able to:

1. Facilitate the two-way flow of information between its workforce the public and the company.
2. Prioritize stakeholders that are most relevant.
3. Leverage local personnel as a known face to engage,
3. Engage local stakeholders with transparency to build trust, defuse criticism and foster support.

Take Aways

- A disjointed and diffuse media environment is not specific to remote response it now the rule for all engagement.
- Finding avenues to visually show what is happening is still the best way to build support initial
- Leverage existing stakeholder behavior and engagement points.
- Ensure you have a minimal ability to engage all stakeholders.
- Prepare remote operations kits – Satellite phone with DSN capability, solar charger, MREs, etc.
- Figure out how to get reporters onscene as soon as feasible or information and imagery flowing in the interim.

Thank you

QUESTIONS?

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