

Florida  
Emergency  
Mortuary  
Operations  
Response  
System

Progress  
Report





# Strategic Plan October 2001



## Strengthening Domestic Security in Florida Funding Strategy



### GOAL III. – HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

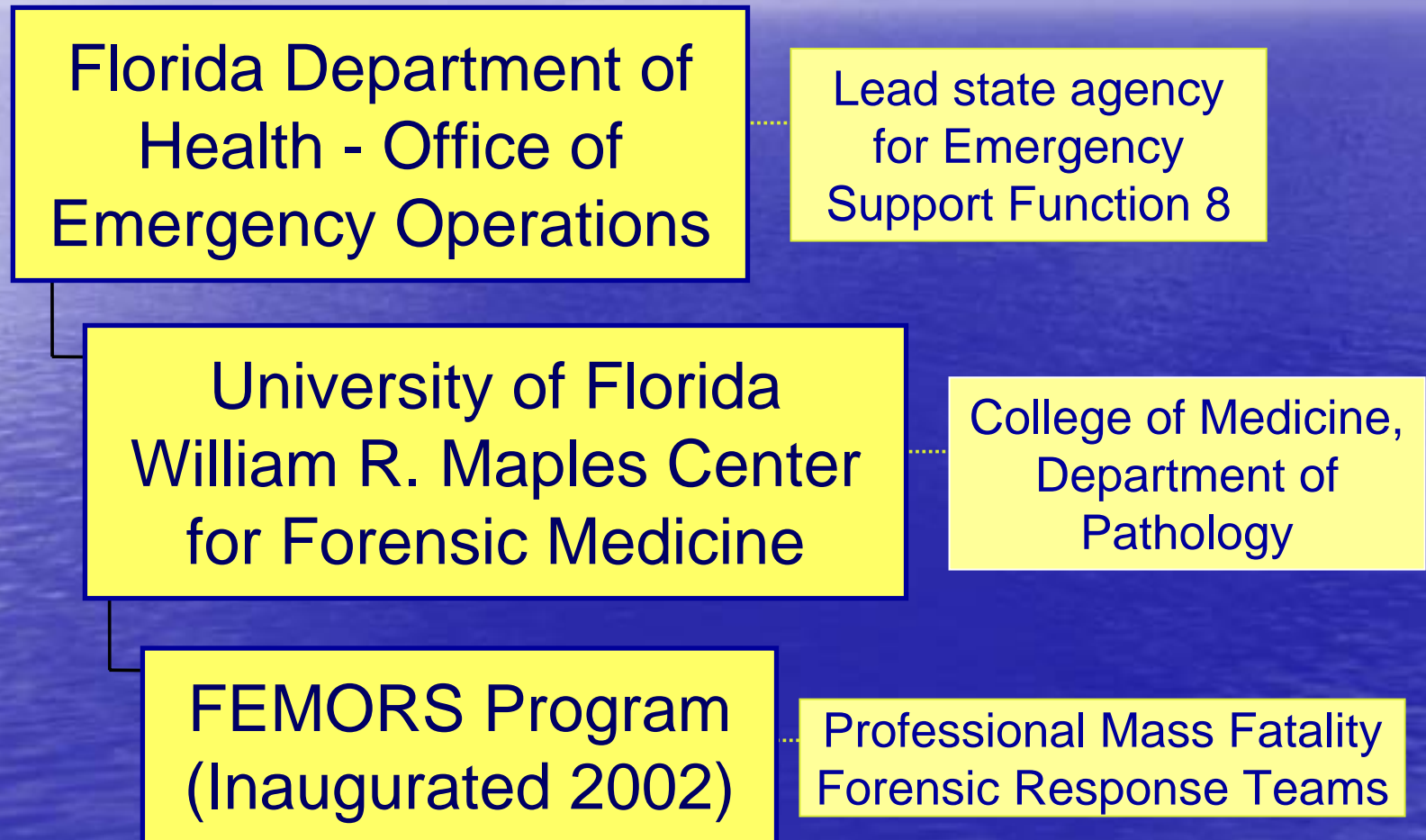
#### STRATEGY 2 – Equipment

Identify and obtain appropriate equipment for all response efforts

<b>Funding Requirements (Human)</b>	<b>\$2,787,371</b>
➤ Enhance statewide Department of Health laboratory capacity	\$389,786
➤ Medical stockpiles - supplies - mass casualty capability	\$420,000
➤ <b>Develop Disaster Mortuary Response Team capabilities</b>	<b>\$400,000</b>
➤ Systems to support collection, analysis, reporting, and sharing of biological and chemical threats to public health.....	\$928,000
➤ State epidemiological intelligence service .....	\$649,585



# What is FEMORS?





# What is FEMORS?

- Forensic Specialists (359)  
(Human Remains & Evidence)
  - Disaster Response Managers
  - Pathologists, Odontologists
  - Anthropologists, DNA Analysts
  - Medical Investigators, Autopsy Technicians
  - Crime Lab Analysts, Fingerprint Analysts
  - CSI Technicians, Administrative Specialists



# Scope of Project

- Develop protocols and train teams of volunteer forensic professionals to assist Florida medical examiners during disasters.
- Develop Mass Fatality Plan Annex
- Maintain a portable morgue for response to mass fatality disasters



# Scope of Project (*the REAL one*)

- *Allow Emergency Operations to concentrate on other disaster missions for the living without worrying about the quality of care for identifying the dead.*



# FEMORS – Services Design

FEMORS Can Provide Aid For\*:

- Search and recovery
- Family Assistance center
- Antemortem data collection
- Mobile Morgue Operations
- Forensic examinations
- Postmortem data collection
- DNA Acquisition
- Personal effects processing
- Remains identification
- Coordination of release of remains
- Records management
- Database administration
- Medical/psychology support
- Safety Officers and Specialists

## DPMU Set-Up Example



Courtesy: DMORT

\* Equipment funding Oct 2005 to complete the service options

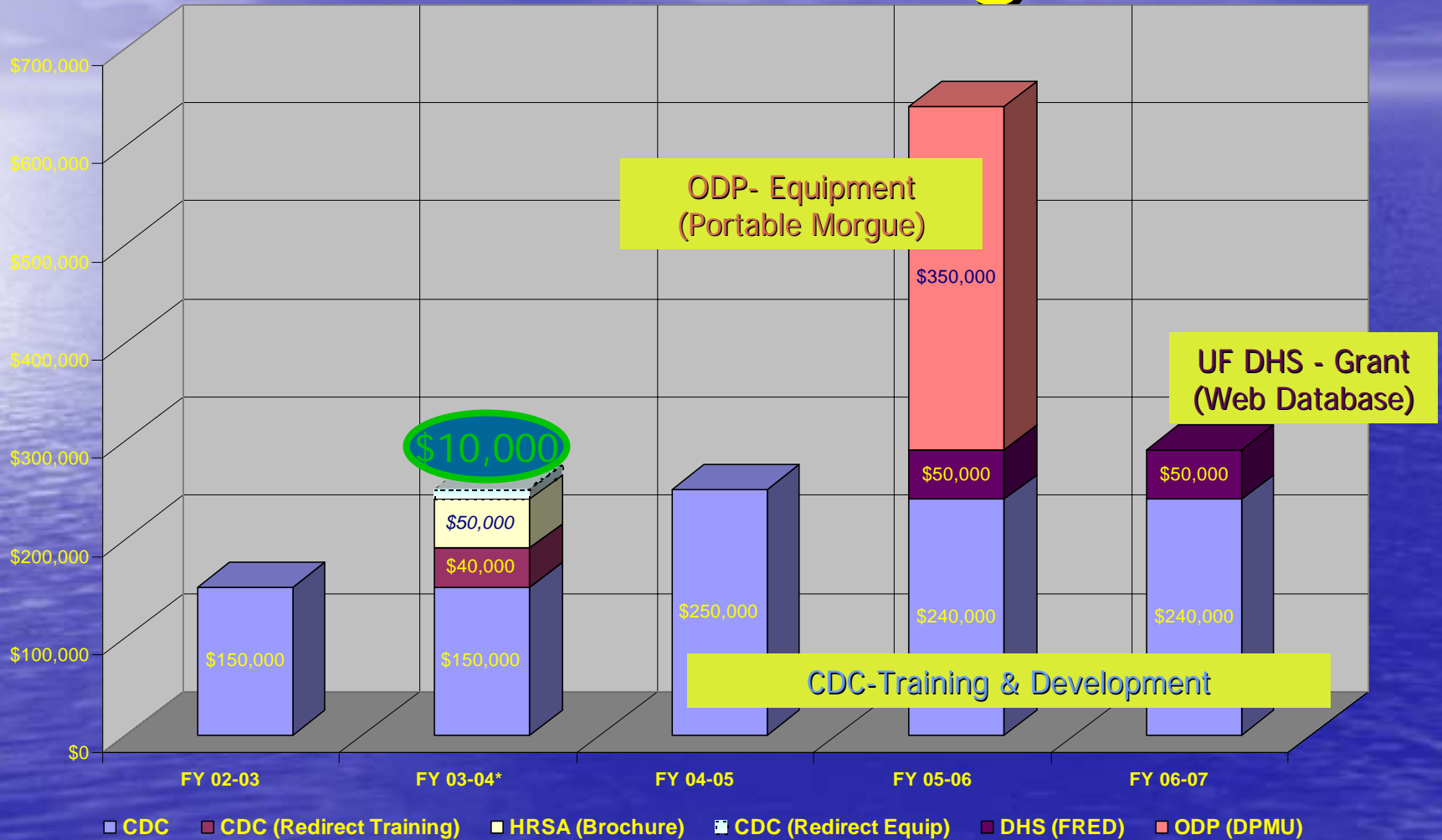


# FEMORS-Development Goals

- State Asset in Support of an All-Hazards Fatality Surge Capacity Response
  - Phase I Recruitment and Training
  - Phase II Facilitate Mass Fatality Plan  
Prepare for warehouse/  
training center
  - Phase III Complete DPMU Basic Load



# FEMORS - Funding



\* CDC approved \$418,000 redirected (i.e., unused 03-04) funds for equipment on Aug. 23, 2004 with a spending deadline of Aug. 30<sup>th</sup>! ~\$10,000 was spent.



# FEMORS – Evolution Year 1

FY 02-03

- Working Group established
- Web-site established
- Recruitment by word of mouth
- Organization and planning for initial training session

March 2003 Inaugural Training



# Year 2 – Goals and Strategies

- Identify Regional Go-Teams
- Expand Recruitment Efforts
- Deliver Field Operations Guide (FOG)
- Secure Funding for DPMU *(So close!)*
- Deliver Informational Road Show to RDSTFs, Medical Examiners, etc.
- Conduct Annual Training Sessions

# Hurricane Season 2004

1. Charley - Alerted and Activated
  - 76 Members on Ready List
  - 37 Members Activated
2. Frances - Alerted and Not Activated
  - 90 Members on Ready List
3. Ivan - Alerted and Activated
  - 101 Members on Ready List
  - 30 Members Activated
4. Jeanne - Alerted and Not Activated
  - 63 Members on Ready List
  - 2 Activated for Command Post Staging



# Hurricane Charley Timeline



Saturday, Aug. 14<sup>th</sup>

- 12:38 am ESF-8 Activated FEMORS
- 37 FEMORS team members deployed due to initial report (39 more became available in 24 hours)

## Activation Message:

Initial reports included 20+ confirmed dead, trailer parks devastated and "bodies everywhere" including a 5-story Condo that had collapsed with those inside calling out to rescuers by cell phone.

# Hurricane Ivan Timeline

Thursday, Sept. 16<sup>th</sup>

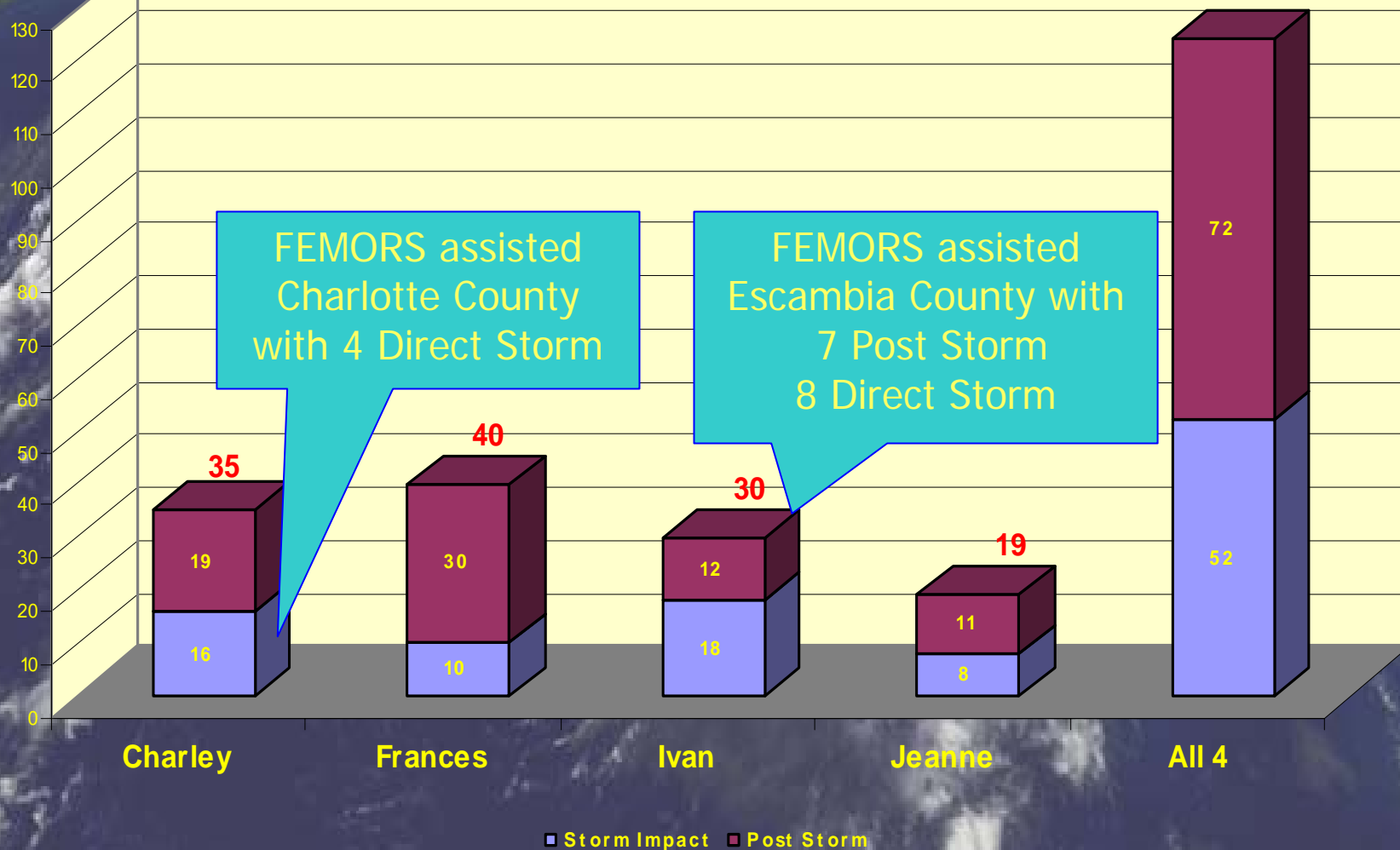
- 12:01 pm ESF-8 Activated FEMORS
- FEMORS Go-Team 12 members mobilized for staging at 5:00 am Friday at Crestview rest stop on I-10
- Additional members set for later stagings

## Activation Message:

Initial reports, from a helicopter deputy, indicated 30+ bodies floating in the water. Other rumors quickly surfaced which made the estimated death toll climb to 60.

# Hurricane Season 2004

## Florida Hurricane Deaths 2004





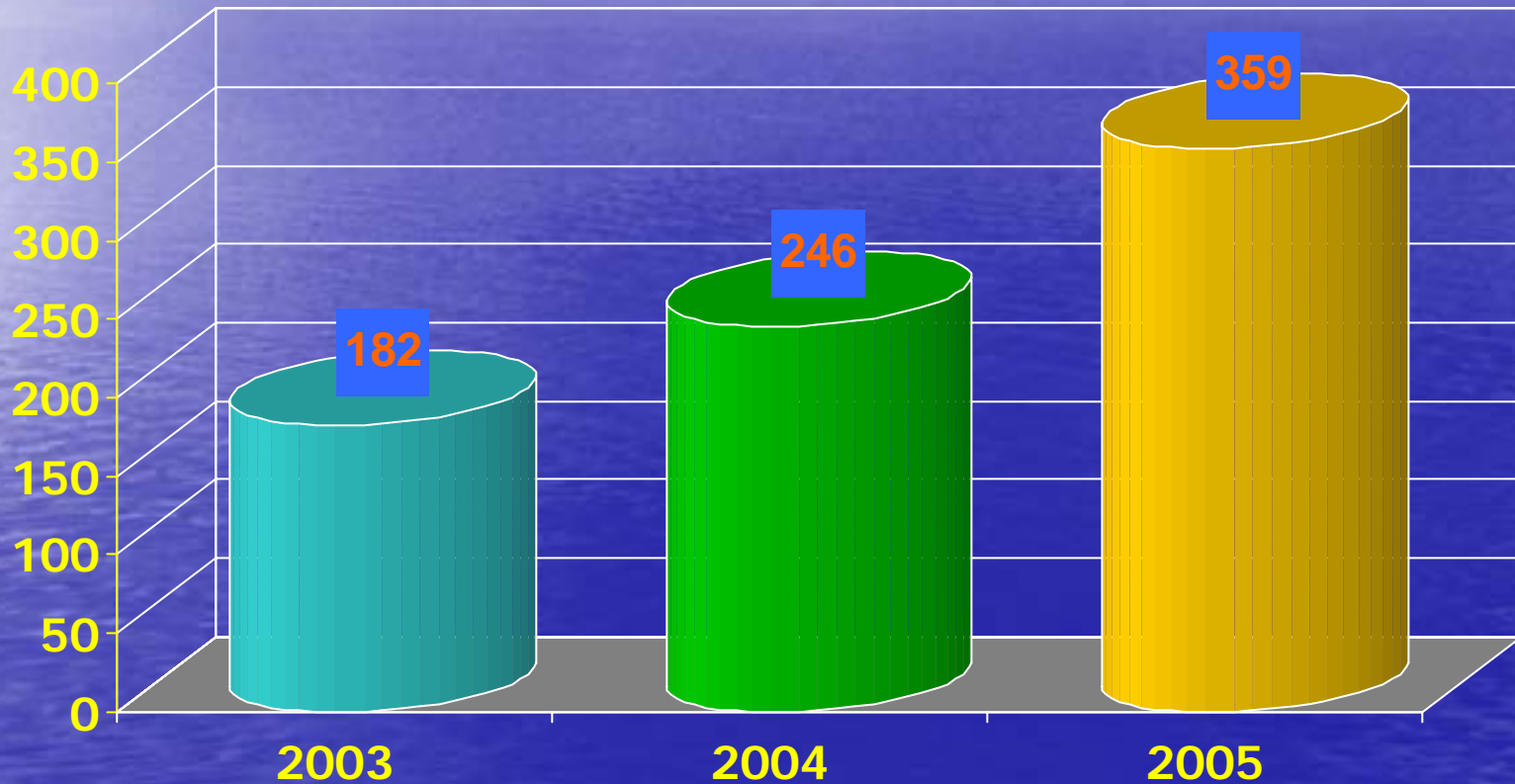
# Year 3 – Goals and Strategies

- Facilitate Mass Fatality Plan Development
- Develop Go-Team as Advisors
- Refine Recruitment Efforts
- Secure DPMU Funding
- Conduct Annual, FAC, and Odontology Training Sessions

June 2005 Annual Training



# FEMORS Team Growth



Multi Disciplinary Forensic Team



# Year 4 – Goals and Strategies

- Develop Go-Team as ICS Core
- Refine Committed Team List
- Activate DPMU Warehouse Operations
- Conduct Annual ICS Training and Exercise of DPMU



## Public Health Preparedness Goals, Objectives & Strategies

In October 2003, the Public Health Preparedness Strategic Planning Team, comprised of participants throughout the state representing public health, emergency medical services, hospitals, emergency management, fire rescue, law enforcement, universities, and other state and community partners, came together to review the current status of preparedness in Florida, and to set the strategic direction for the next two years.

The revised goals, objectives and strategies outlined below are designed to lead Florida to an optimal state of preparedness by June 2007.



**5 Year Plan**  
Public Health Preparedness  
Strategic Plan 2003-2007  
Midpoint Review - March 2005

Protecting the Public Health and Safety

The mission of the Florida Department of Health is to promote and protect the health and safety of all people in Florida through the delivery of quality public health services and the promotion of best's care standards.



**Objective 5.6 Mortuary Surge Capacity:** In partnership with medical examiners, funeral directors and forensic specialists, develop disaster mass fatality capability.

**Strategy 5.6A:** By 6/30/05, develop a mass fatality plan to supplement unmet needs of local medical examiners in each region. The plan will fully integrate into the statewide mass casualty plan.

Completed

**Strategy 5.6B:** By 6/30/05, complete pre-registration of the Florida Emergency Mortuary Response System (FEMORS) team of qualified "reserve" forensic professionals who can be deployed in the event of a mass fatality emergency to assist the medical examiner with identification of human remains.

Completed

**Strategy 5.6C:** By 6/30/06, implement a system for rapid pre-registration of new members of the FEMORS mass fatality response team.

Started

**Strategy 5.6D:** By 6/30/07, establish and equip a mobile mortuary unit for response to mass fatalities.

Oct 2005



# Mass Fatality Plan

- Facilitated input of Medical Examiners Commission, Funeral Associations, and Forensic Specialists
- Plan adopted by MEC Feb 3, 2005
- Forwarded to CIRP for review April 6, 2005

## ANNEX (??)

### THE STATE OF FLORIDA

#### MASS FATALITY RESPONSE PLAN (To the Catastrophic Incident Response Plan of the State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan)

#### TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. Introduction
- II. Concept of Operations
  - A. General
  - B. Organization
  - C. Notifications
  - D. Actions
  - E. Direction and Control
- III. Responsibilities - Medical Examiner
  - A. Tracking System
  - B. Remains Recovery
  - C. Holding Morgue Operations
  - D. Pre Processing Transportation and Storage
  - E. Morgue Operations
  - F. Post Processing Transportation and Storage
  - G. Body Release for Final Disposition
  - H. Family Assistance Support
  - I. Records Management (Victim Processing),
  - J. Records Management (Accounting and Finance), and
  - K. Progress Reports and Public Information.
- IV. Mass Disposition of Human Remains (Rational for Identification Before Disposition)
  - A. Governmental Authority
  - B. Epidemic Outbreak Myth
  - C. Identification of Victims Before Disposition
- V. References
- VI. Statutory Citations
- VII. Medical Examiner Districts

**PRIMARY AGENCY:** Florida Department of Health  
**SUPPORT AGENCIES:** Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE)  
Florida Medical Examiners Commission (MEC)  
Florida Emergency Mortuary Operations Response System (FEMORS)  
Florida Funeral Director Associations  
Florida Dental Societies

Final DRAFT



# Timeline for Completion

- Warehouse Operations Start August 2005
- Portable Morgue Equipment Procurement to start October 2005
- 6-9 months to Marshal Equipment
- Exercise Portable Morgue Spring 2006
- Ready to Deploy June 2006



# Areas of Concern

- Funding for Continuing Operations
  - Currently Grant Funded
  - Long Range?
- Decontamination of Remains
  - U.S. Relies on 1 Federal DMORT-WMD Team
  - Not envisioned as part of FEMORS
  - Sub Speciality Cost \$1,000,000



# Preparedness Rule #1

FEMORS prepares now because

***HOPE is neither an  
option nor a  
plan of action!***



# Questions?



Visit: [www.FEMORS.org](http://www.FEMORS.org)