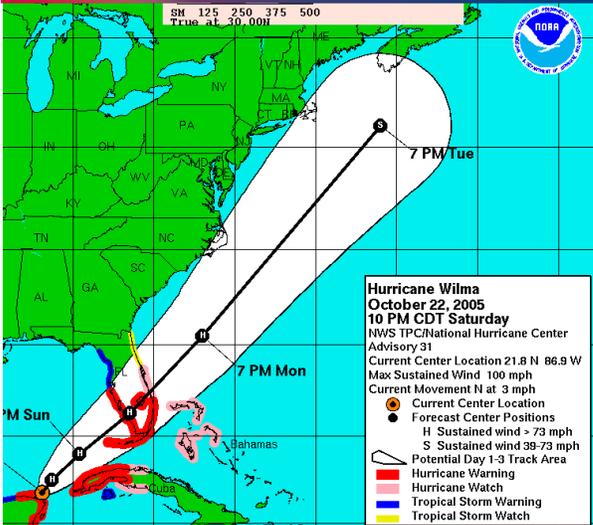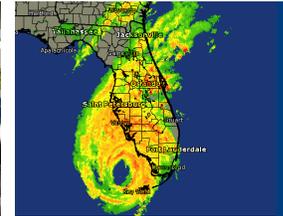## TASK FORCE SUPPORTS HURRICANE WILMA DEPLOYMENT

On October 20th, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) deployed 4 FEMA Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) task forces to Florida in advance of Hurricane Wilma. In order to support the deployment, FEMA activated a FEMA Incident Support Team (IST) and requested that Texas Task Force One (TX-TF1) personnel deploy and support staffing of the IST. The IST established a base camp in Orlando, FL and began planning operations for the 4 US&R task forces.

Hurricane Wilma was the most intense hurricane ever recorded in the Atlantic basin. Wilma was the twenty-second storm, thirteenth hurricane, sixth major hurricane, and fourth Category 5 hurricane of the record-breaking 2005 season. With winds reaching 120 mph, Wilma caused widespread destruction of critical infrastructure, and over 3.2 million people lost power. The storm was responsible for 35 deaths in the US and $20.6 billion in damages during it's 4.5 hour path across Florida.

TX-TF1 provides personnel to staff the FEMA US&R IST for deployment throughout the United States upon activation by FEMA. Supporting the mobilization and deployment of the FEMA IST provides task force personnel an opportunity to train and practice command and planning functions at large scale incidents and improves the State's capability for disaster response and mitigation. The multi-disciplinary FEMA US&R task forces afford search, rescue, medical, and technical capabilities, and a wide variety of services for catastrophic events.

The initial damage reports from Hurricane Wilma were not as severe as originally predicted, and local authorities did not request assistance from any of the four FEMA search and rescue teams. As a result, on October 26th, the TX-TF1 member received demobilization orders from FEMA.

Deployment Statistics

- **Incident involved 1 person deployed for 6 days**

  FEMA Incident Support Team

    - 1 task force member deployed as the IST Deputy Logistics Section Chief

A member of The

TEXAS A&M SYSTEM