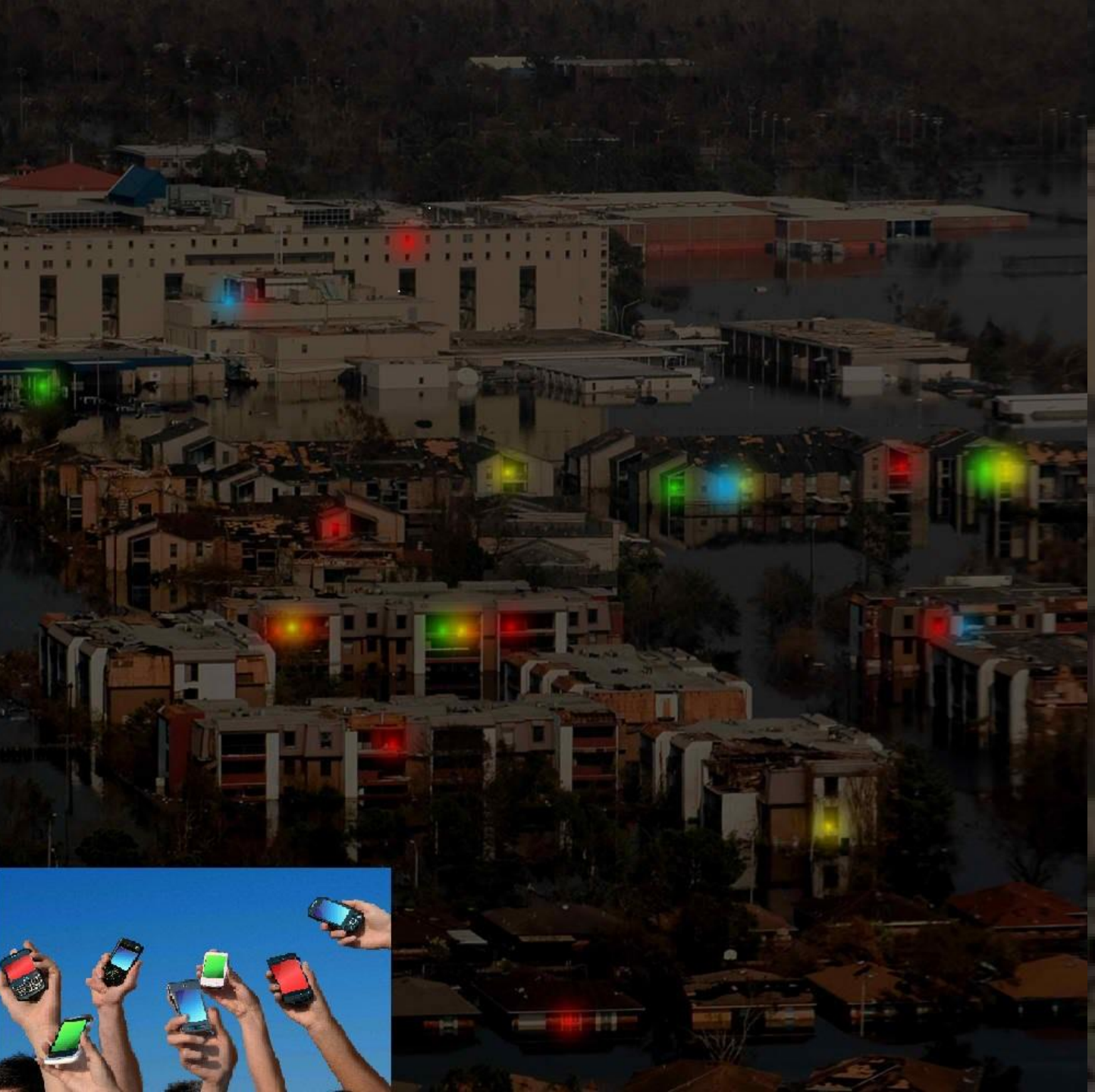


The 21st Century disaster survivor visual signaling system. Help save more lives. Simple, effective, & practical.

Purpose

* Save more lives.
* Provide survivors a simple and practical way to communicate with 1st Responders when networks are out in the immediate aftermath of a major disaster.
* Provide important information related to survivor's location, condition, & group association to responders to help best respond.
* SOS was first recognized ~1905, we are in 2024. Almost everyone carries a visual signaling device. The time for an update is here.

Practicality

* Almost everyone carries a visual signaling device with them most of the time. Cellphones, Ipads, Smart Watches, Laptops, etc… are all visual signaling devices that do not require network connectivity to function.
* Keychain lights, flashlights with filters, pet collar lights, regular flashlights, etc… can all be used to participate in the system.

The post disaster survivor visual signaling system

CHILD

A CHILD - RED

Children are less likely to take notice of the threats to their surroundings. They may be afraid of sights and sounds following disaster, and they require additional equipment necessary for an evacuation. Having this information prior to attempting a rescue allows the first responder to focus on the needs of a child and increases the likelihood of a secure and life-saving rescue.

DISABLED

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES - GREEN

For 54 Million Americans with disabilities, surviving a disaster can be the beginning of a greater struggle without mobility assistance. Communications technology is vital for people with disabilities during a disaster to help assess damage, collect information, and deploy supplies. By incorporating a specific color-code program, in the event of a sudden natural disaster, First Responders would minimize further injury and facilitate relief and operations.

ADULT

ADULTS - BLUE

Adults are more knowledgeable about their surroundings and safety. They are capable of self-evacuation and communicating vital information on other survivors, locations and threats. Adults are capable of following evacuation commands and familiar with rescue equipment and gear. By incorporating a specific color-code program, in the event of a sudden natural disaster, First Responders would minimize further injury and facilitate relief and operations

SERVICE ANIMALS

SERVICE ANIMALS / PETS - YELLOW

Service Animals/Pets are considered family. Service animals assist persons with disabilities and can assist a rescue operation by simply being identified through a color code system. Locate a Service Animal/Pets visual signal and the owner may be near-by.

CATCH ALL

CATCH ALL - WHITE

Catch all is for those caught without an app or colored light (multi-LED flashlight, flashlight with filters, colored key chain lights, dog color lights, etc....). A survivor can utilize a simple flashlight or phone LED to signal their location and condition. The only information that is missing is the group association.

STEADY SIGNAL: "I'M OKAY, I NEED RESCUING"
FLASHING SIGNAL: "I NEED MEDICAL ASSISTANCE, I NEED RESCUING"

Cost

- Zero! Previous Texas Legislative bills have determined there is no fiscal note associated with this type of legislation. See https://capitol.texas.gov/tlodocs/87R/fiscalnotes/pdf/HB00671C.pdf#navpanes=0
- It costs survivors nothing to use their communication devices to visually signal their location, condition, & group association.
- It costs nothing additional to have SAR teams search for the illuminated display signals.

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 87TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

May 29, 2021

TO: Honorable Dan Patrick, Lieutenant Governor, Senate
Honorable Dade Phelan, Speaker of the House, House of Representatives

FROM: Jerry McGinty, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: **HB671** by Martinez (Relating to establishment of the disaster identification system for a declared state of disaster.), **Conference Committee Report**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

It is assumed that the costs associated with the bill's provisions relating to establishment of the disaster identification system for a declared state of disaster could be absorbed using existing resources.

Local Government Impact

No significant fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Source Agencies: 300 Trusteed Programs - Gov, 303 Facilities Commission, 405 Department of Public Safety, 575 TX Division of Emergency Management

LBB Staff: JMc, SZ, CMA, AJL, DKN, KFB, NA

Will it change Search and Rescue Operations?

No! SAR procedures will continue as they do today.

Benefits:
Responders will have more survivor information and locations especially at night or under adverse conditions. Helps better plan rescue operations.

Responders will have a more effective way of recognizing survivors, especially at night or under adverse conditions (ex. blacked out buildings). Beats waving/hanging white towels or clothing to indicate you are there and need rescue.

Responders will be equipped with important information. For example, how effective is it to lower a hoist to a blind person? Another example, a responder knowing they are coming upon an animal is helpful for two reasons. One, you never know how an animal will react. Two, find the service dog and you may find the owner.

*** It has been proven that by using a light source at the end of a ladder in a smoke-filled room that the light source provides over 85% improvement related to situational awareness. Survivors will be located faster, especially at night or under adverse conditions

Survivor Expectations

•Will new survivor expectations be created?

•NO!

- Today survivor's wave their hands, clothing, and other items to get responders attention in hopes it leads to their rescue. This expectation will not change by recognizing a 21st Century SOS survivor visual signaling system.

- By recognizing the new system, survivors can visually signal using something they have with them most of the time in a more effective way.

- Rescuers are better able to see survivor location, condition, & group association, especially at night or under adverse conditions.

Mandate?

No! For example, HB671 creates no mandate. If a county, city, etc... decides not to use it they don't have to. If they do, they have an officially recognized system so that all arriving responders from all around the country are speaking the same language.

Execution

Current readiness apps, such as "Ready South Texas" app, FEMA apps, and other apps can add the visual signaling feature. There are many apps in the marketplace that change screen colors, for example, "Color Flashlight". I have put out two apps myself called Disaster ID & Visual 911+ to help prove the concept. The Disaster ID app and Visual 911+ are free and collect no personal data.

APPLICATIONS, LED MOBILE SCREENS, COLOR FLASHLIGHTS, KEYCHAIN LIGHTS *are all options under a 21st Century S-O-S*

S&T NATIONAL CONVERSATION
ON HOMELAND SECURITY TECHNOLOGY

Responder of the Future Dialogue

Section 5.3: Use of Illuminated Identifiers for Search and Rescue

July 29, 2015

JIFX
Joint Interagency Field Experimentation

JIFX 17-3 Quicklook

From the Director:

The Naval Postgraduate School Field Experimentation program is fifteen years old this year and yet every event is filled with new developments, insight, and learning. In 2002, under the leadership of Dr. Dave Fletzer we began to build our model of a Multi-Institutional, Semi-Structured Learning Environment to support emerging Special Operations requirements in the War on Terror. These areas of experimentation, to develop better intelligence, communication, weapons, and targeting capabilities remain, and we continue to explore how emerging technologies can meet them. In 2012, we expanded to become the current Joint Interagency Field Experimentation (JIFX) program to include requirements and research challenges from all the Combatant Commands, services and Interagency partners. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response (HADR) applications have been a recurring line of experimentation, and was a large part of the 17-3 cycle held at Camp Roberts. Over a dozen organizations, including private industry, academic and government researchers worked together to integrate data from multiple air and ground sensors, deployable power, and handheld equipment to aid Search and Rescue and improve triage operations. Many of these technologies were developed over several events, and some were brand new prototypes. What has been consistent since 2002 however, is the culture of collaborative development – thanks to all of the participants and we look forward to seeing you again in August.

This year also marks a transition point in our JIFX Team. Over the past couple of years, we've seen a few of our team depart for new opportunities and adventures. Nelly Turley is now a Lieutenant in the Coast Guard and we hope her next assignment brings her back to the West Coast. Tristan Allen is now running a small business disaster resiliency program for the State of Washington. Replacing them has been difficult, but our new team is now mostly in place. Ashley Hobson is our new Operations Manager. Ashley had an internship with us in 2012, and comes most recently from a local environmental consultancy company. Aurelio Monarrez and Jean Ferreira have been with NPS for a number of years in other capacities, but are now full-time on the CRUSER/JIFX team. Aurelio manages our air operations, while Jean manages our finances and logistics. Kerri Williams, who is also a Navy Reserve Lieutenant Commander, coordinates large integrated field experiments, such at the integrated unmanned systems Command and Control experiment that will be conducted later this year on San Clemente Island.

WHAT'S INSIDE

http://www.nps.edu/fx

Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do

Utilizing Available Technology for Preparedness and Response

continued from page 22

elderly, almost 49% are due to falling. These falls prevent a survivor from moving to a door or window or a landline phone to request assistance. Other situations, for example being stranded in a vehicle due to accident or weather, confused, disoriented or lost elderly could seek assistance with the touch of a few icons. The Visual 911+ app gives survivors a handheld tool to summon assistance immediately.

Field Tests of Visual 911+ App

A field test of the Visual 911+ app was conducted by the Northeast Region Unmanned Aircraft Systems Unit of the Grand Fork Sheriff's Office on Nov. 20, 2016, in Grand Fork, North Dakota. Following the field test, an interview was conducted with Professor Alan Frazier, Deputy Sheriff, who reported that "all signals from the application were clearly visible from an AeroVironment Qube UAS using an electro-optical camera at 100' AGL and 200' AGL at a range of approximately 100 yards." He further commented, "...it is my opinion that the distinct colors would help in prioritizing rescues as well as determining the potential need for additional equipment or rescuers (i.e. a disabled vs. non-disabled victim or victim with a pet)." When asked if the survivor location information was of value, he stated, "I believe it would be in a large-scale disaster in which cellular voice communications were down, but potentially digital only data communa disaster may have no idea of addresses or nearby streets." Lastly, when asked, "Do you believe establishing a post disaster survivor visual signaling system is a good idea to improve UAS effectiveness?" he replied, "Yes. However, getting the word out to the public and the rescue community is going to be the biggest hurdle."

A second field test was conducted by C4L Tactical Operations operating out of Eldora, Iowa. The incident commander of the C4L Tactical Operations Response Unit indicated that the field test was conducted during the recent search and rescue operations following Hurricane Matthew (Sept. 28-Oct. 10, 2016). The incident commander reported seamless communication with his team throughout the operations, because he utilized the Visual 911+ application to:

- track team members during mobilization; and
- track team members who were forced to evacuate (in some cases multiple times) as the storm moved up the east coast of the United States.

Visual 911+ also provides emergency communication to family and friends. Users pre-populate a simple profile, including up to three emergency contacts and email addresses. If the user finds him/herself in a life-ing device will generate an email communication to the emergency contacts containing the user's GPS coordinates and a message to call 911. Family and friends can provide that information to rescue personnel. This silent method of emergency communication could be vital in terrorist, active-shooter or lone-wolf attacks. Because the user only needs to select a few icons, and no dialing sounds or voices alert a perpetrator of the communication, users can stay safe if hiding or sheltering from threatening criminal activity.

Conclusion

It has been well documented that emergency communications are a priority during disasters. Visual 911+ provides not only that priority communication, but also provides the lifesaving signaling capabilities necessary for night-time rescue, which can substantially assist both survivors and rescuers. ▲

The *IAEM Bulletin* is distributed monthly to the 6,000+ members of IAEM, plus others with government and legislative roles in emergency management. It is distributed at national, regional and state emergency management conferences.

The specialists who read the *IAEM Bulletin* frequently play a key role in selecting, purchasing, ing emergency equipment, supplies, products

IAEM Bulletin April 2017

Utilizing Available Technology for Preparedness and Response: The 21st Century SOS

By Kimberly Cunningham, CEM, Juan Cienfuegos, and Edward Weiss, Global Business Continuity Management, New York City, New York

Harness the power of technology to prepare yourself and your family and help rescuers find you faster. The Visual 911+ app is an easy-to-use and effective new tool that provides emergency lighting and sound to assist rescuers with locating survivors and alerts family and friends via email of your GPS location and personal safety status. The practical uses and its simplicity make Visual 911+ a modern-day SOS and a life-saving tool. Not only does it save lives, it costs nothing to rescuers or users, and it is not dependent upon external power or cellular network connectivity.

Studies indicate that more than 90% of Americans carry a cell phone or smart device with them at all times. In a sense, the majority of the population is equipped with a night-time visual signaling device, making Visual 911+ practical to deploy. Visual 911+ leverages that fact to provide users with emergency signaling capabilities which not only could save the user's life, but the emergency signaling color-coded system alerts rescuers to the type of survivor they are seeking.

Color-Coded System

Specifically, the color-coded system provides rescuers with much needed information prior to rescue (red for children, green for the handicapped, blue for an adult, yellow for a pet, and/or white as a catch all color. It also provides a steady and constant signal for "I'm OK" and a flashing signal for "I need assistance".) A legislative bill was Martinez (D-Texas) in an effort to improve jurisdictional search and rescue operations. Mr. Martinez' forwarding thinking stems from his background as a first responder and emergency management professional. The legislator and his supporters hope to utilize the passage of the Texas legislative bill to improve search and rescue outcomes in their own jurisdiction, as well as utilizing it as a basis for introduction and adoption in other jurisdictions throughout the country.

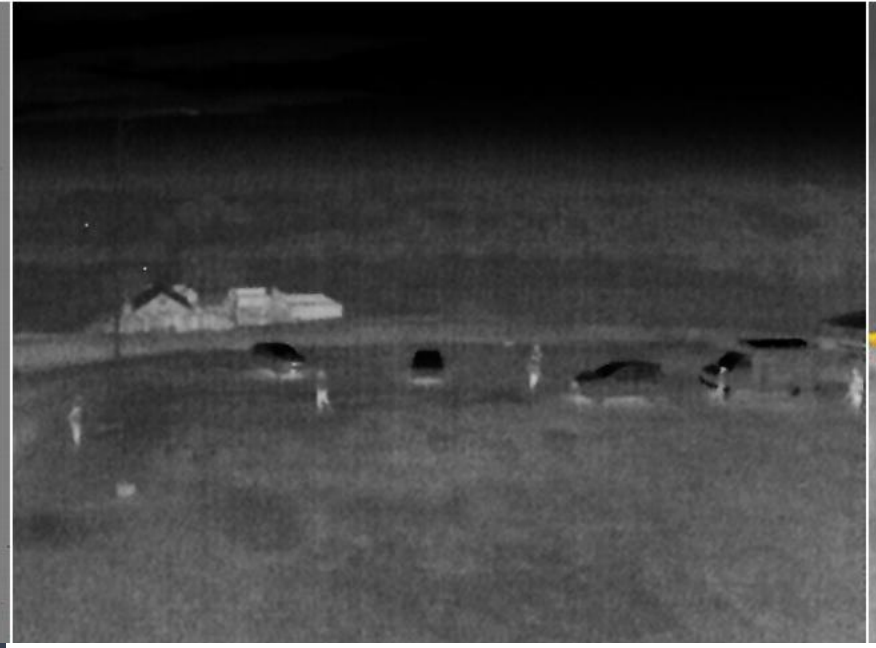
Survivor Group Composition

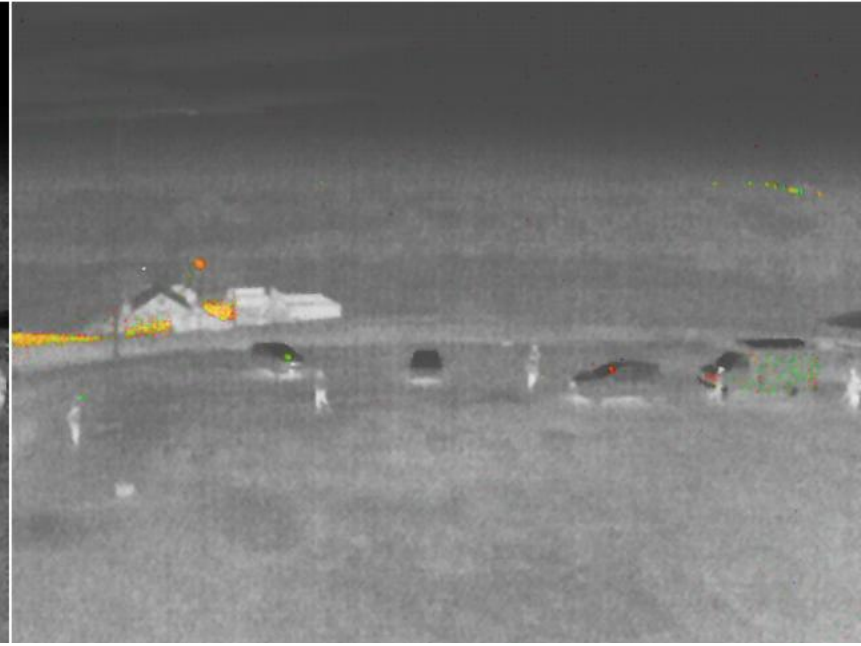
Rescuers can utilize UAS, helicopters, airplanes, or high ground to look for the visual signals and make note of the information (location, condition, survivor group composition). Simply put, there is a difference when it comes to the rescue of adults and children. Adults are more knowledgeable about their surroundings and threats to their safety, capable of following evacuation commands, familiar with rescue operation equipment and gear, capable of self-evacuation (provided the adult is not injured) and capable of communicating vital information on other survivors, locations and threats. Children, on the other hand, are (1) less likely to take notice of the threats to their surroundings, (2) may have difficulty self-evacuating, (3) may have difficulty following evacuation commands, (4) may be unfamiliar and afraid of the sights and sounds following a disaster, (5) may be unable to communicate effectively to aid rescuers, or (6) require additional equipment a rescue allows the rescuer to focus on the needs of that particular survivor and increases the likelihood of a safe and life-saving rescue.

Had the technology been available for Hurricane Katrina survivors, for example, thousands may have been rescued sooner. During Hurricane Katrina approximately 100,000 people chose not to evacuate prior to the storm. Let us assume that 50% of them did not utilize the illuminated signaling system. Let us further assume that of those 50%, the signals of the people who used an illuminated signal during the rescues were not visible. Even so, 25,000 people would still have been locatable using an illuminated signaling system. In large-scale rescues, like rescues conducted during Hurricane Katrina, having multiple survivors utilizing a signaling system would have allowed rescuers to prioritize rescues based upon survivor group composition and/or the medical conditions of the survivor group.

Special Needs

Not only can the Visual 911+ app benefit survivors and rescuers in the examples provided above, it also recognizes the needs of the disabled community. By incorporating a specific color-code for disabled people, rescuers can be prepared to assist the specific needs of the disabled-survivor by having appropriate evacuation equipment, medical support devices, medicine or the like with them when they find the survivor. Specifically, statistics reveal that of the injuries suffered by the





NPG JIFX 17-3

•What this set of images shows is that the color lights are extremely effective in identifying people based on the state of their light. It also shows that the IR is indispensable for night operations as it helps provide situational awareness. As you remember from when you were up on the roof with us, it was hard to see people and especially whether they were standing, sitting, etc. The fused image on the left, which combines the EO and IR, exemplifies the benefits of fusion as it provides a “full situational awareness”. – Teledyne experimenter.

“Utilizing Available Technology for Preparedness & Response: The 21st Century SOS”, IAEM Bulletin

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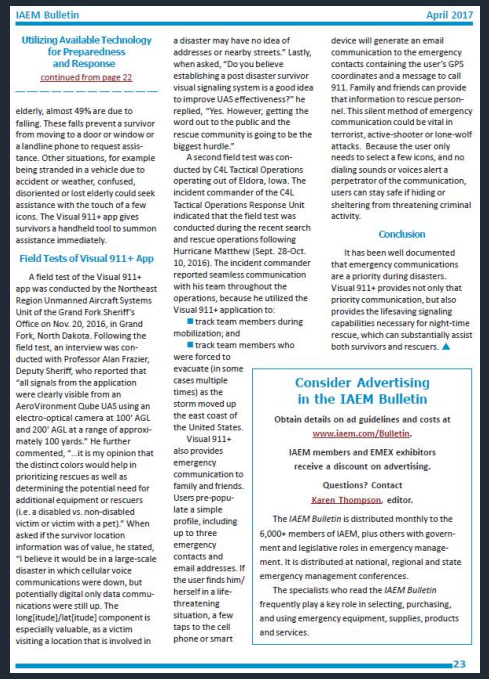
continued on page 23



Utilizing Available Technology for Preparedness and Response

continued from page 22

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Why a Law?

- Legislation is needed to give official recognition/uniformity to the system that helps mitigate future search and rescue outcomes. It would be difficult if East Texas adopted one color code and West Texas another and through MUTUAL AID together to respond to an emergency, they interpret the signal differently.

- Elected Officials *Prepare and Respond to Emergencies*, they set the tone and direction in the community for prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery activities. They provide policy, mission, direction and authority.

- Therefore, it is important that elected officials understand what their role is prior to a disaster. They should take pre-emptive measures to mitigate or reduce the effects of disasters on their communities. Sadly, many communities do not address mitigation until they are in the recovery phase of a disaster.

- It has been proven that mitigation saves money. It is documented how every $1 spent on mitigation saves society an average of $4 to $6.

Texas Legislature Online
History

Home | My TLO | House | Senate | Legislation | Search | Committees | Calendars

History | Text | Actions | Companions | Amendments | Authors | Sponsors | Captions

Bill: HB 671 **Legislative Session:** 87(R)

Last Action: *05/30/2021 S House adopts conf. comm. report-reported*

Caption Version: Senate Committee Report
Caption Text: Relating to establishment of the disaster identification system for

Author: Martinez

Sponsor: Lucio

Subjects:
Disaster Preparedness & Relief (I0211)
Health--Emergency Services & Personnel (I0384)
Health--General (I0385)
LIGHTING (S0126)
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, TEXAS DIVISION OF (VP6FW)

Companion: SB 328 by Lucio, Identical

House Committee: Homeland Security & Public Safety
Status: Out of committee
Vote: Ayes=9 Nays=0 Present Not Voting=0 Absent=0

Senate Committee: Water, Agriculture & Rural Affairs
Status: Out of committee
Vote: Ayes=8 Nays=0 Present Not Voting=0 Absent=1

House Conferees: Appointed (05/28/2021) Martinez (Chair) | Canales | Guillen | Hul

Senate Conferees: Appointed (05/28/2021) Lucio (Chair) | Bettencourt | Hinojosa | P

Actions: (descending date order)
Viewing Votes: Most Recent House Vote | Most Recent Senate Vote

	Description	Comment	Date	Time	Journal Page
S	House adopts conf. comm. report-reported		05/30/2021		3124
H	Statement(s) of vote recorded in Journal		05/30/2021		5199
H	Record vote	RV#1750	05/30/2021		5198

H	House adopts conference committee report		05/30/2021		5190
H	Conf. Comm. Report distributed		05/29/2021	05:13 PM	
S	Conference committee report filed		05/29/2021		2933
H	Senate appoints conferees-reported		05/29/2021		5100
H	Senate grants request for conf comm-reported		05/29/2021		5100
S	Senate appoints conferees		05/28/2021		2701
S	Senate grants request for conference comm.		05/28/2021		2701
S	House appoints conferees-reported		05/28/2021		2650
S	House requests conference committee-reported		05/28/2021		2650
S	House refuses to concur-reported		05/28/2021		2650
H	House appoints conferees		05/28/2021		4791
H	House requests conference committee		05/28/2021		4791
H	House refuses to concur in Senate amendments		05/28/2021		4791
H	Senate Amendments Analysis distributed		05/27/2021	09:08 PM	
H	Senate Amendments distributed		05/27/2021	09:06 PM	
H	Senate passage as amended reported		05/27/2021		4244
S	Record vote		05/27/2021		2190
S	Passed		05/27/2021		2190
S	Read 3rd time		05/27/2021		2190
S	Record vote		05/27/2021		2190
S	Three day rule suspended		05/27/2021		2190
S	Vote recorded in Journal		05/27/2021		2190
S	Passed to 3rd reading as amended		05/27/2021		2190
S	Vote recorded in Journal		05/27/2021		2190
S	Amended		05/27/2021		2190
S	Amendment(s) offered	FA1 Lucio	05/27/2021		2188
S	Read 2nd time		05/27/2021		2188
S	Rules suspended-Regular order of business		05/27/2021		2188
S	Corrected comm. report printed & distributed		05/21/2021	01:22 AM	
S	Placed on intent calendar		05/21/2021		
S	Committee report printed and distributed		05/20/2021	01:55 PM	
S	Recommended for local & uncontested calendar		05/20/2021		
S	Reported favorably w/o amendments		05/20/2021		1669
S	Considered in public hearing		05/18/2021		
S	Referred to Water, Agriculture, & Rural Affairs		05/14/2021		1470
S	Read first time		05/14/2021		1470
S	Received from the House		05/12/2021		1381
H	Reported engrossed		05/11/2021	04:21 PM	2923
H	Nonrecord vote recorded in Journal		05/11/2021		2761
H	Statement(s) of vote recorded in Journal		05/11/2021		2761
H	Record vote	RV#951	05/11/2021		2761
H	Passed		05/11/2021		2761
H	Read 3rd time		05/11/2021		2761

Bill: HB 671 **Legislative Session:** 87(R) **Author:** Martinez

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5	Stage 6	Stage 7
Filed 11/30/2020	**Out of House Committee** 5/5/2021	**Voted on by House** 5/11/2021	**Out of Senate Committee** 5/20/2021	**Voted on by Senate** 5/27/2021	**Governor Action**	**Bill Becomes Law**

Legend

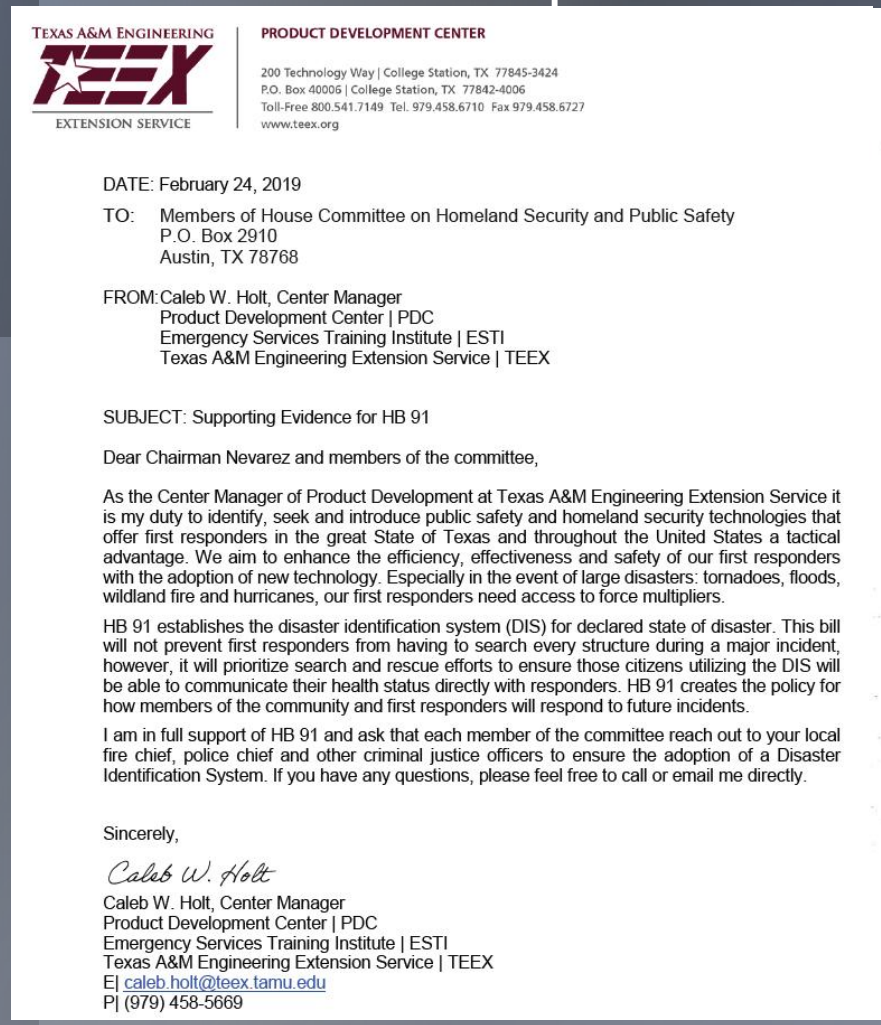
- Indicates bill passed stage
- Indicates bill has not reached stage
- Indicates bill failed to complete stage

Helpful Links

Legislative pro
Introducing a b
Referral to a co
Committee rep

Stage 1	Bill filed by Martinez on 11/30/2020.
Stage 2	Bill reported out of House committee on Homeland Security & Public Safety with vote of 9 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Present Not Voting, 0 Absent.
Stage 3	Bill passed the House.
Stage 4	Bill reported out of Senate committee on Water, Agriculture & Rural Affairs with vote of 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Present Not Voting, 1 Absent.
Stage 5	Bill passed the Senate.
Stage 6	Not reached.
Stage 7	Not reached.

Examples of letters of support for legislation



TEXAS A&M ENGINEERING EXTENSION SERVICE

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT CENTER

200 Technology Way | College Station, TX 77845-3424
P.O. Box 40006 | College Station, TX 77842-4006
Toll-Free 800.541.7149 Tel. 979.458.6710 Fax 979.458.6727
www.teex.org

DATE: February 24, 2019

TO: Members of House Committee on Homeland Security and Public Safety
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768

FROM: Caleb W. Holt, Center Manager
Product Development Center | PDC
Emergency Services Training Institute | ESTI
Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service | TEEX

SUBJECT: Supporting Evidence for HB 91

Dear Chairman Nevarez and members of the committee,

As the Center Manager of Product Development at Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service it is my duty to identify, seek and introduce public safety and homeland security technologies that offer first responders in the great State of Texas and throughout the United States a tactical advantage. We aim to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness and safety of our first responders with the adoption of new technology. Especially in the event of large disasters: tornadoes, floods, wildland fire and hurricanes, our first responders need access to force multipliers.

HB 91 establishes the disaster identification system (DIS) for declared state of disaster. This bill will not prevent first responders from having to search every structure during a major incident, however, it will prioritize search and rescue efforts to ensure those citizens utilizing the DIS will be able to communicate their health status directly with responders. HB 91 creates the policy for how members of the community and first responders will respond to future incidents.

I am in full support of HB 91 and ask that each member of the committee reach out to your local fire chief, police chief and other criminal justice officers to ensure the adoption of a Disaster Identification System. If you have any questions, please feel free to call or email me directly.

Sincerely,

Caleb W. Holt

Caleb W. Holt, Center Manager
Product Development Center | PDC
Emergency Services Training Institute | ESTI
Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service | TEEX
E| caleb.holt@teex.tamu.edu
P| (979) 458-5669

City of McAllen
Office of the Mayor

JAMES E. DARLING
MAYOR

April 10, 2017

Bird Holmquist
Legislative Director for:
Rep. Phil King
Homeland Security and Public Safety Committee Chairman

Via email to: Bird.Holmquist@house.texas.gov

RE: In Support of H.B. 1598

Dear Ms. Holmquist:

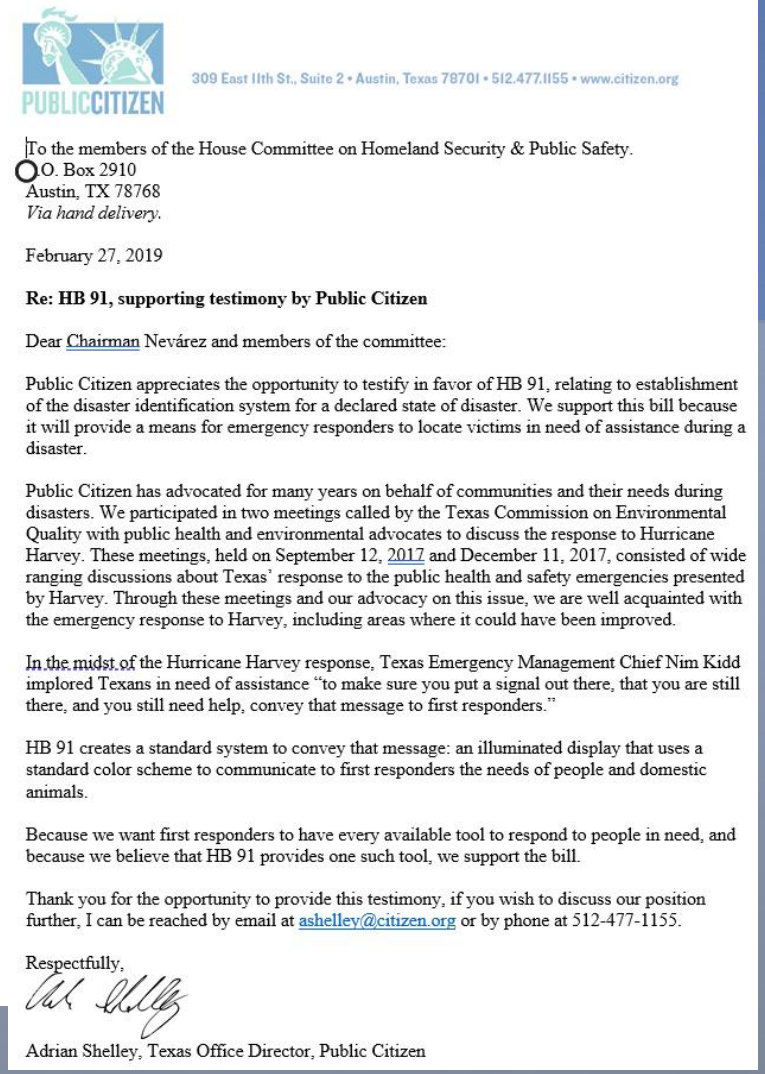
As Mayor of the City of McAllen, located in South Texas and in close proximity to the Texas-Mexico border, my staff and I work diligently as a local emergency management agency to ensure the safety of our citizens and visitors. In McAllen, we are vulnerable to floods, extreme temperatures, and severe weather conditions arising in the Gulf of Mexico.

The establishment of a disaster identification system for a state of disaster as proposed by House Bill 1598 would be easily implemented and greatly improve the ability of emergency response personnel to locate victims in a disaster-stricken area. The proposed bill has no fiscal impact, provides for entirely voluntary participation by civilians, and could ultimately save lives.

While I am unable to attend hearings regarding H.B. 1598 in person, I send this letter as a testament of my support for this bill. **Please urge Representative King to support H.B. 1598.** Thank you for your attention to this important matter that affects the safety and security of every Texan.

Sincerely,

Jim Darling
Mayor



PUBLICCITIZEN

309 East 11th St., Suite 2 • Austin, Texas 78701 • 512.477.1155 • www.citizen.org

To the members of the House Committee on Homeland Security & Public Safety.
O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768
Via hand delivery.

February 27, 2019

Re: HB 91, supporting testimony by Public Citizen

Dear Chairman Nevárez and members of the committee:

Public Citizen appreciates the opportunity to testify in favor of HB 91, relating to establishment of the disaster identification system for a declared state of disaster. We support this bill because it will provide a means for emergency responders to locate victims in need of assistance during a disaster.

Public Citizen has advocated for many years on behalf of communities and their needs during disasters. We participated in two meetings called by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality with public health and environmental advocates to discuss the response to Hurricane Harvey. These meetings, held on September 12, 2017 and December 11, 2017, consisted of wide ranging discussions about Texas' response to the public health and safety emergencies presented by Harvey. Through these meetings and our advocacy on this issue, we are well acquainted with the emergency response to Harvey, including areas where it could have been improved.

In the midst of the Hurricane Harvey response, Texas Emergency Management Chief Nim Kidd implored Texans in need of assistance "to make sure you put a signal out there, that you are still there, and you still need help, convey that message to first responders."

HB 91 creates a standard system to convey that message: an illuminated display that uses a standard color scheme to communicate to first responders the needs of people and domestic animals.

Because we want first responders to have every available tool to respond to people in need, and because we believe that HB 91 provides one such tool, we support the bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony, if you wish to discuss our position further, I can be reached by email at ashelley@citizen.org or by phone at 512-477-1155.

Respectfully,

Adrian Shelley, Texas Office Director, Public Citizen

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DATE: February 24, 2019

TO: Members of House Committee on Homeland Security and Public Safety
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768

FROM: Caleb W. Holt, Center Manager
Product Development Center | PDC
Emergency Services Training Institute | ESTI
Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service | TEEX

SUBJECT: Supporting Evidence for HB 91

Dear Chairman Nevarez and members of the committee,

As the Center Manager of Product Development at Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service it is my duty to identify, seek and introduce public safety and homeland security technologies that offer first responders in the great State of Texas and throughout the United States a tactical advantage. We aim to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness and safety of our first responders with the adoption of new technology. Especially in the event of large disasters: tornadoes, floods, wildland fire and hurricanes, our first responders need access to force multipliers.

HB 91 establishes the disaster identification system (DIS) for declared state of disaster. This bill will not prevent first responders from having to search every structure during a major incident, however, it will prioritize search and rescue efforts to ensure those citizens utilizing the DIS will be able to communicate their health status directly with responders. HB 91 creates the policy for how members of the community and first responders will respond to future incidents.

I am in full support of HB 91 and ask that each member of the committee reach out to your local fire chief, police chief and other criminal justice officers to ensure the adoption of a Disaster Identification System. If you have any questions, please feel free to call or email me directly.

Sincerely,

Caleb W. Holt

Caleb W. Holt, Center Manager
Product Development Center | PDC
Emergency Services Training Institute | ESTI
Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service | TEEX
E| caleb.holt@teex.tamu.edu
P| (979) 458-5669

City of McAllen
Office of the Mayor

JAMES E. DARLING
MAYOR

April 10, 2017

Bird Holmquist
Legislative Director for:
Rep. Phil King
Homeland Security and Public Safety Committee Chairman

Via email to: Bird.Holmquist@house.texas.gov

RE: In Support of H.B. 1598

Dear Ms. Holmquist:

As Mayor of the City of McAllen, located in South Texas and in close proximity to the Texas-Mexico border, my staff and I work diligently as a local emergency management agency to ensure the safety of our citizens and visitors. In McAllen, we are vulnerable to floods, extreme temperatures, and severe weather conditions arising in the Gulf of Mexico.

The establishment of a disaster identification system for a state of disaster as proposed by House Bill 1598 would be easily implemented and greatly improve the ability of emergency response personnel to locate victims in a disaster-stricken area. The proposed bill has no fiscal impact, provides for entirely voluntary participation by civilians, and could ultimately save lives.

While I am unable to attend hearings regarding H.B. 1598 in person, I send this letter as a testament of my support for this bill. **Please urge Representative King to support H.B. 1598.** Thank you for your attention to this important matter that affects the safety and security of every Texan.

Sincerely,

Jim Darling
Mayor

PUBLICCITIZEN

309 East 11th St., Suite 2 • Austin, Texas 78701 • 512.477.1155 • www.citizen.org

To the members of the House Committee on Homeland Security & Public Safety.
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768

February 3, 2021

Re: HB 671 by Rep. Martinez, Public Citizen support

Dear Chairman and members of the committee:

Public Citizen appreciates the opportunity to voice its support for HB 671 by Representative Mando Martinez, relating to establishment of the disaster identification system for a declared state of disaster. We support Rep. Martinez's bill because it will provide a means for emergency responders to locate victims in need of assistance during a disaster.

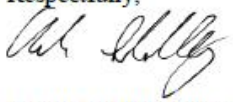
Public Citizen has advocated for many years on behalf of communities and their needs during disasters. We have long supported additional methods for public notification and means for emergency responders to identify members of the public in need. We testified in favor of HB 91 (86R), a precursor to HB 671, on February 27, 2019 in the House Committee on Homeland Security & Public Safety. We are also supporting the companion to HB 671, SB 328 by Senator Eddie Lucio.

In the Fall of 2017 after Hurricane Harvey, we participated in conversations about disaster and emergency response that including leadership from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the Texas Department of Emergency Management. In the midst of the Hurricane Harvey response, TDEM Chief Nim Kidd implored Texans in need of assistance "to make sure you put a signal out there, that you are still there, and you still need help, convey that message to first responders."

HB 671 creates a standard system to convey that message: an illuminated display that uses a standard color scheme to communicate to first responders the needs of people and domestic animals. Because we want first responders to have every available tool to respond to people in need, and because we believe that HB 671 provides one such tool, we support the bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this letter of support, if you wish to discuss our position further, I can be reached by email at ashelley@citizen.org or by phone at 512-477-1155.

Respectfully,



Adrian Shelley, Texas Office Director, Public Citizen

Kay Goss <kaycgoss@icloud.com>
To: J C

Mon, May 1 at 9:35 PM

I have been working in Emergency Management for 40 years. First twelve years working for two Governors of Arkansas coordinating emergency management, fire services, and emergency medical services programs and policies, almost seven years as Associate FEMA Director in charge of National Preparedness, Training (EMI and Mount Weather), and Exercises, 12 years as a private sector emergency manager, and last ten years as a nonprofit leader in several nonprofits (DRONERESPONDERS, International; Domestic Preparedness Journal; the Institute for Diversity and Inclusion in Emergency Management and the National Academy for Public Administration. All the while, teaching at UNLV, Metropolitan College of New York, and George Mason University.

I understand the needs of emergency managers and public safety responders.
Recently I became aware of HB671/SB328. I support the establishment of a Disaster Identification system and applaud the Texas Legislature for working with the professionals in these vital fields to produce this very vital legislation.

Best wishes for much success in leading the way!

With Deep Respect,

KAY C. GOSS, CEM
Building The Emergency Management Profession
Supporting Innovation
Teaching|Coaching|Leading|Advocating Academic and Training Programs
Alexandria, VA

Recent event

U.S. NEWS

They were alone in a fight to survive. Maui residents had moments to make life-or-death choices

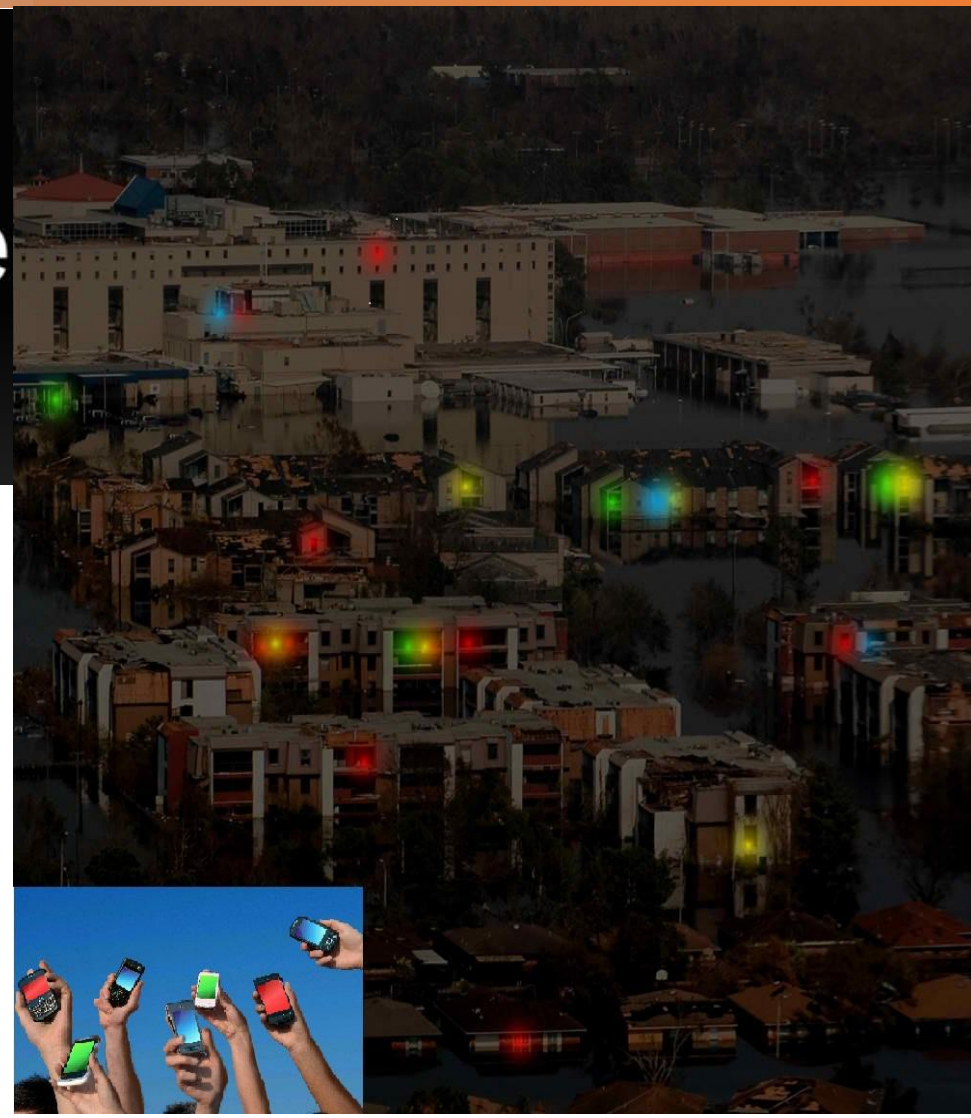
BY CLAIRE GALOFARO, CLAIRE RUSH AND MATT SEDENSKY

Updated 10:39 PM CDT, August 14, 2023

"Kaauwai couldn't even see buildings anymore. Something was exploding; it sounded like fireworks. She ran inside. She couldn't think — she just grabbed her dog and some clothes, never imagining she would not see her house or anything in it ever again."

"The U.S. Coast Guard's first notification about the fires was when the search and rescue command center in Honolulu received reports of people in the water near Lahaina at 5:45 p.m., said Capt. Aja Kirksy, commander of Coast Guard Sector Honolulu.

The boats were hard to see because of the smoke, but Cicchino and others used cellphones to flash lights at the vessels, guiding them in to rescue some, mostly children. Fire trucks eventually came and drove them out, through the flames."



•Questions

•Contact Juan Cienfuegos at 956-645-5265 or at synersolutions@sbcglobal.net with any questions or for supporting information.