



## News Release

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### DEFENSE DISTRIBUTION CENTER

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#### For Immediate Release

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## Deployable team helps distribute hurricane relief supplies

SEGUIN, TEXAS (Sept. 18, 2008) – The Deployable Distribution Center helped deliver relief supplies to the people affected by Hurricane Ike which hit Southeast Texas Sept. 13.

The majority of the team deployed to the region Sept. 12 so they would be in position to provide support to the recovery efforts as soon as the hurricane left the region.

The team initially helped the Federal Emergency Management Agency set up a national logistics staging area at Fort Sam Houston near San Antonio, Texas. That site was later moved to the small town of Seguin, near San Antonio.

As the situation became clearer, the team helped set up other sites to distribute food, water, ice and other necessities to people in the region.

“We adjusted to the situation based on where FEMA wanted us and where the most people who needed help were,” said Marc Parsons, director of the deployable center, which is also called DDXX. “Our team worked long hours while we were here to make sure the necessities got where they needed to go.”

The team ultimately ended up with personnel supporting two sites: a national logistics staging area at a U.S. Air Force auxiliary airfield near San Antonio, Texas, and one at Ford Park Arena near Beaumont, Texas.

The Beaumont site began operations Sept. 14. The DDXX team supported both sites with two teams of employees working rotating 12 hour shifts.

Jerel Ballesteros and Matthew Abreu are distribution process workers at Defense Distribution Depot San Joaquin, Calif. They’ve both been



Andre Mallari gives directions to a driver with a truck load of water. Malleri, a distribution process worker, deployed to Southeast Texas with the Deployable Distribution Center to provide relief to survivors of Hurricane Ike which hit the region Sept. 13.

with DDXX for a relatively short time but have found the recovery operations to be the experience they were looking for.

While their jobs with DDXX – checking in trucks and directing them to the proper staging areas – seem somewhat mundane at first glance, it’s the fact that they are helping people in need that motivates both of them. Both employees applied for positions on the DDXX team because they wanted to do something exciting and to give back to their country.

“I wanted to travel and do different things,” Ballesteros said.

Abreu, who served three years in the Army as a crewman on an M-1 Abrams tank, saw this as an opportunity to continue to serve. He felt it would be exciting too.

“I saw working for DDXX as an adventure,” he said. Neither expected to end up in Southeast Texas helping with hurricane recovery efforts, but both find it satisfying to be involved in something so meaningful.

“I feel really proud to be here and doing this,” Ballesteros said. “These people need our help.”

Ballesteros got a personal glimpse into the tragedy shortly after he arrived at the staging area in Beaumont.

“There was a couple that walked all the way here the first day we got here and seeing them get water and food, really made me feel like we were doing something really good here,” Ballesteros said. “Just being part of this organization has been satisfying.”

This was the first time the Deployable Distribution Center’s two-year history, that it had the opportunity to deploy in response to a natural disaster. The center’s previous deployments were planned evaluations of its capabilities.

“This is what the team is designed to do, help people recover from a disaster,” said Abreu, who also helps the truckers find fuel, maintenance help, or any other support they need. “It’s a good feeling to give back to the people impacted by the hurricane.”

The members of the DDXX team drew from all their experiences they got over the last couple of years as they were evaluated to make this operation a success. Their success during the recovery efforts was the result of those experiences and lessons, but Parsons acknowledges that doing it for real is what counts.

“We certainly shined during our previous evaluations, but the real thing is always a little different,” Parsons said. “This was our chance to show that we could do what we said we could.”



Trucks line up along Interstate 10, lower right, to get into the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s national logistics staging area near Beaumont, Texas, Sept. 17. The Defense Distribution Center’s Deployable Distribution Center helped set up and operate the staging area.

The DDXX team helped process almost 4,000 trucks full of meals, water, ice and plastic sheeting survivors needed while they waited to return to their homes. The heaviest days were Sept. 17 and 18 when between 700 and 800 trucks arrived at the Beaumont site.

“It was kind of chaotic for a while,” Parsons said. “But this is an awesome team and they pulled together and got the job done.”

The Deployable Distribution Center was established in June 2006 in response to a need identified by the Department of Defense after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans and the surrounding area in August 2005. It was funded through the Defense Logistics Agency’s research and development program and was part of a larger program funded by the Undersecretary of Defense for Advanced Systems and Concepts.

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The Deployable Distribution Center is a capability of the Defense Distribution Center (DDC) headquartered in New Cumberland, Pa. DDC headquarters operates a network of 25 other fixed distribution sites around the world. By offering this deployable distribution capability, DDC headquarters provides the military and/or emergency responders with world-class support for the distribution of supplies anywhere in the world and on very short notice. DDC headquarters, established in 1997, is a field activity of the Defense Logistics Agency.