

CCUSA Disaster Operations

Situation Report

Disaster Event:	Gulf Oil Crisis
Situation Report Number:	03.1-0603
Dates Covered by Report:	June 3, 2010
Submitted By:	Kim Burgo Vice President Disaster Operations

A. SITUATION OVERVIEW

Affects from the oil plume have now reached the coasts of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and remains 100 miles off the coast of Pensacola, Florida. Catholic Charities agencies throughout the area are working hard to meet growing needs amongst affected communities.

To date, BP states they have received more than 110,000 calls to date, resulting in over 30,000 claims for assistance. 15,000 claims have been paid to date totaling more than \$40 million. Utilizing local business owners, the Coast Guard and its own staff, BP is utilizing 1,600 off shore clean up operations.

NOAA extended the northern boundary of the closed fishing area, leaving 63% of Gulf Federal waters available for fishing (88,522 square miles are affected). The Department of Interior reports that 5 platforms were evacuated and wells secured. Platform personnel reported experiencing eye irritation, headaches, and burning of the sinuses

B. AFFECTED POPULATION

At the moment, the affected population can be broken into two categories, namely primary and secondary affected populations, and include the following categories:

Primary Affected

- Fisherman, Boat Captains, Dockhands
- Small businesses supporting the fishing industry – bait shops, concessions stands/food service vendors, charter boat operations
- Large seafood packing plants
- Seasonal Migrant workers
- Undocumented migrant workers
- Independent (Sea-going) Contractors (unable to collect unemployment insurance)

Secondary Affected

- Tourism/Tourism industry
- Hotels/Casinos
- Small business owners
- Service workers:
 - Waiters/Waitresses
 - Cooks
 - Packers
 - Housekeeping staff
- Restaurant Owners

There has also been some indication that Oil Workers on other rigs are being asked to evacuate their work as the current oil leakage reaches their rig. For some, this means no work for undesignated periods of time. More information is being gathered in this area.

On-the-ground assessment and Case Management information has identified the following:

The Small Business Administration has opened Recovery Centers throughout the Gulf; however, individuals are reluctant to apply for SBA loans since loans obtained during the 2005 Hurricane Season (Katrina/Rita) are still being paid back. Potential applicants feel the future economic possibilities for the fishing/boating industry are so bleak that it would not make sense for them to secure a second SBA loan to carry them over without access to steady income.

BP has offered contracts to licensed boat captains with a clause requiring boats to be on a call list for cleanup efforts. Of those who signed contracts, the following is being reported

- To date, less than 20% of fishermen are being utilized for clean up, and by contract, the same fishermen have agreed to not cast nets while under contract.
- Boat Captains received \$5,000 upon signing the contract but many have not received any additional compensation in 6 weeks.
- BP requires that all vessels under contract be fueled and ready to set sail on a moment's notice at the owner's expenses. Fuel charges for a large vessel can cost between \$15k and 40k. Insurance is also not being covered by BP and costs the boat owner between \$15k to 20K.
- A large percentage of vessels that ARE being utilized by BP have not received payment for their services, other than the initial \$5,000 received upon signing.
- Misinformation on open/closed waterways is causing vessel owners to expend money to "be ready" only to be turned away and unable to recuperate their losses

The Vietnamese population makes up the largest percentage of fisherman/shrimpers in the Louisiana/Mississippi area. Many do not speak English and those that do are reluctant to sign up with BP. This population has indicated their annual living and boating expenses are upwards of \$75,000 per family.

C. PROGRAMMING AND RESPONSE

Catholic Charities agencies are very active in their response to the crisis. Activities in each area vary due to financial and human resources.

New Orleans

- Operating 5 Community Resource Sites in four county parishes in the affected region (St. Bernard Parish, Plaquemines, Jefferson, and Orleans)
- **To date, have served 9,000 individuals (approx 2,250 families)**
- Providing the following services:
 - Case management
 - Mental Health Assessments/Counseling – Anger/Stress Management
 - Providing Food Boxes
 - Providing Non-Food Items (diapers, formula, wipes)
 - Providing Gift/Certificates and local vouchers
- Also providing assistance with:
 - Utilities
 - Household supplies
 - Clothing
 - Employment
 - Rent
 - Mortgage
 - Doctor/Medical needs
 - Prescription Assistance
 - Gas/Fuel

CC New Orleans has also received \$1 million from BP for short term assistance (60 days) and has been invited to submit a second proposal, that include collaboration with partners, for a longer time frame (6 months).

Biloxi

- Operating out of three existing Case Management Sites in 3 counties (Hancock, Harrison, Jackson)
- **To date, has served 3,600 individuals (approx. 900 families)**
- Providing the following services:
 - Case Management
 - Food Provision
 - Direct service needs (various financial assistance related to utilities, rental assistance, medical)
 - Mental Health Counseling Assessments

Through case management services, CC Biloxi is also seeing an increased request for Mental Health Counseling around domestic violence.

Biloxi has also sent mobile teams to affected areas, harbors, etc to provide services and has hosted community meetings around disseminating “good information” to affected populations.

CC Biloxi is currently conducting a thorough assessment of populations and needs to seek funding and align services

Mobile

- Current area of focus is Bayou La Batre,
- CC Mobile is assessing the ramp up of services and is in close coordination and contact with the local Catholic parish level

- (Due their current access to resources) CC Mobile is waiting for other resources to run out (BP, unemployment, federal benefits) prior to getting involved. Expected need: 1,000 people; primary need: electric bills
- CC Mobile is coordinating with VOAD. The only responder is The Salvation Army, which is providing food for volunteers. Boat People SOS has a local office in Bayou La Batre and is focused on serving needs of Vietnamese population.

In the Mobile area, BP is hiring recreational fisherman to help with response and not following up with payments. Yesterday, the commercial fisherman staged a protest and used their boats to block the water access.

Catholic Charities Offices in Houma/Thibodeaux and Pensacola also have activities either on the ground or in the assessment/preparation stages. CCUSA is awaiting updated information from these agencies for report inclusion.

D. IMMEDIATE NEED REQUESTS

Submitted by Catholic Charities/New Orleans, the chart below shows current needs being requested at sites and the percentage of requests made for that specific need. (as of June 1, 2010)

# needs assessments >>>	Total/overall
Food	95%
Utilities	78%
Household supplies	59%
Clothing	31%
Employment	16%
Rent	20%
Mortgage	23%
Baby supplies	26%
Doctor/Medical *	13%
Prescription assistance *	12%
Gas/Fuel *	45%
Anger/stress management *	4%
Other	5%

While the above chart indicates the needs requested by clients, the following are needs requested by Catholic Charities Agencies:

- Funds to hire case managers, translators, and support staff
- Funds to provide direct assistance (direct service dollars)
- Cash cards – for groceries, fuel, adult and baby needs

E. PARTNER COORDINATION

Agencies throughout the gulf are working closely with other NGO partners (though many have pulled out post-Katrina in Mississippi for example). Other partners include:

- USDA
- International Relief Development
- HHS (Food Stamp Program)
- United Way
- BP
- State and Local VOAD
- Catholic Charities agencies throughout the region

F. HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY

- Fisherman under contract are required by BP to attend a four (4) hr Hazardous Materials (HazMat) training. OSHA has authorized a basic HazMat training for 40 hrs for supervisors. (Normal HazMat training is 140 hours before being allowed to touch hazardous materials) This reduced requirement for crude oil cleanup has potential for serious health issues in the short and long term for cleanup crews not properly trained in Marine HazMat. Operations. Skin contact and inhalation of crude oil fumes pose lasting health effects.
- Local Law Enforcement, Fire and Emergency Medical Services are anticipating an increase in crime and emergency call volumes.
- (as stated above) CC Biloxi has begun to see an increase in the area of domestic violence.
- The Houma area reports an increase of medical conditions amongst the elderly population. This will become a greater risk once the oil nears the Florida coast.

G. LONG TERM CONCERNS:

Health issues will be on the increase.

- An increase in breathing issues has been reported, particularly amongst the elderly population.
- Under trained hazmat workers have begun to report skin and breathing problems.

Hurricane Season

- A tropical depression can cause significant damage to coastal areas with oil-slicked waters.
- High winds may cause oil to be “picked up at sea” and disbursed through a large area amongst homes and communities. Smaller oil-slick disasters affecting property has resulted in properties and homes being demolished due to contamination

Unemployment/Economic

- It is critical to remember the affected populations for the oil spill are the same individuals who were impacted in 2005 by Hurricanes Katrina/Rita and in 2008 by Hurricanes Gustav/Ike. Numbers of individuals served continue to increase rapidly. This disaster has the potential to cause a “ripple” affect into the tourism and tourism service communities, particularly amongst hourly wage workers

Resources

- This is not a disaster where agencies are receiving large amounts of recourses to meet the social service needs of the population. There is a dire need to access funding that can be used to meet the immediate and long term needs of the growing vulnerable population