

National Preparedness Month, AFCEC Leading the Way!

By AFCEC Operations Directorate

Every year, emergency managers nationwide focus on disaster outreach education within their jurisdictions during September's National Preparedness Month. Keeping in step with our civilian partners, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Space Force initiated their own information campaign while mirroring the Federal Emergency Management Agency's NPM and weekly themes. The Air Force Civil Engineer Center's Emergency Management Division outfits installations through the "Be Ready" Program with a full range of educational and informative materials since the program's inception in 2014.

This year, 100 Department of the Air Force installations across the total force participated in NPM activities. In addition to traditional information booths, bases leveraged social media, public affairs, local media (such as Armed Forces Network news and radio), and 5K fun runs to raise disaster awareness based on local hazards. Many installations had to use innovative engagement strategies due to COVID protocols and restrictions, and others couldn't participate due to mission demands – such as support for Operation Allies Refuge.

Part of the yearly NPM summary is reporting activities on behalf of each service to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy for a consolidated Defense Department roll up report and special recognition for top performing installations. This year, the OUSD-P is benchmarking how AFCEC's Emergency Management Division executes this data collection for DAF, and implement with our other sister service counterparts. Our data call is more thorough and organized than the existing DOD standard, but also executed more efficiently and timely using online survey tools, giving a better site picture with much less manual data entry and processing at the tail end. We are currently coordinating on how this could be implemented DOD-wide.

At Tyndall AFB, Florida, the installation is still recovering from Hurricane Michael three years ago. Disasters can happen any time, any where and have long-lasting effects, so you should always BE READY. AFCEC's Emergency Management Division is at the core for preparing Airmen and Guardians, civilians, contractors and family members on our bases and in our communities.