

Involving Southern Baptists in Disaster Relief



Serving Christ in Crisis

North American Mission Board, SBC

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Preface

Looking back, I can see how God led the way to the position of National Disaster Relief Director for the North American Mission Board. Through the fire department, I was trained to respond to emergencies. Through life, I have experienced both sides of a disaster and know what a family goes through during such a time. God led me to work with the Florida Baptist Disaster Relief team and opened doors that I would never have believed possible. I ministered to flood victims, tornado and hurricane victims, and New York September 11 victims before accepting the national position with the North American Mission Board in June 2003. Every incident brings new challenges and new opportunities. I have worked with many committed volunteers from Florida and around the country and no matter what the circumstances, God's work is carried out through this ministry. In September, 2003, I had the responsibility of coordinating the largest logistical response in the history of the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief. This response demonstrates the commitment of disaster relief volunteers across North America. More than 2,000 volunteers from 24 state conventions were involved.

Disaster relief volunteers feel the call of God to minister in disaster situations. Disasters require a rapid response to spiritual and physical needs. Disaster relief volunteers stand ready at a moment's notice to help the hurting and bring hope during a crisis. Southern Baptist Disaster Relief has gained national and international recognition for its work. Our volunteers have served in high profile disasters in the United States, such as Hurricanes Hugo, Andrew, and Isabel; the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City, the terrorist attacks in New York City, Washington, D.C., and western Pennsylvania, and the crash of the shuttle Columbia. Volunteers have provided food and water purification after wars and earthquakes internationally. But we can not forget the disasters that happen on a more local level. Perhaps the publicity is not as great, but the faithful service of the disaster relief volunteers remains the same. If it were not for the great job our volunteers do, we would not have such high recognition.

I want to thank Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteers who have "shared a cup of water in Jesus' name." Please encourage others to get involved!

Terry Henderson
National Disaster Relief Director, North American Mission Board
April 2004

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Introduction

Welcome!

You are about to embark on an adventure that has the potential to change your life. From its very modest beginnings to the well-developed organization of today, Southern Baptist Disaster Relief continues to touch the lives of thousands of disaster victims and volunteers.

God continues to call out individuals to give of themselves in caring for those affected by disaster. Jesus used the parable of the Good Samaritan to challenge people who wanted to experience eternal life, to love God with all of their heart and mind, and to love their neighbors. When challenged with the question of who is my neighbor, Jesus responded with the parable of the Good Samaritan. Anyone in need is to be viewed as our neighbor.

Our world continues to experience devastation and destruction. Man-made events as well as those blamed on God (acts of God) continue to challenge our mind with “why.” Why did that happen? And who or what is to blame? The truth is that God did not ask us to try and figure out why things happen the way they do. He did not ask us to figure out who or what is to blame. He just said to love Him and love others.

We continue to learn how important it is to care for others. Just the simple act of listening to those who are affected by disaster initiates the healing process. By allowing others to tell the story of how an event affected them, we assist them in realizing that it does not have to be a debilitating event.

In addition to the crisis intervention that provides the beginning of healing, there are the physical ministries that assist with the necessities of life. Southern Baptist Disaster Relief provides many different types—it may be food, water, child care, communication, showers, laundry, repairs, rebuilding, or other essential tangible items that contribute to the resumption of life.

More than 28,500 Southern Baptist volunteers have prepared themselves to assist during a crisis event. Southern Baptist churches, associations, and state conventions have purchased vehicles and equipment. Leadership has planned for disaster events. One of the areas that has assisted Southern Baptist Disaster Relief in becoming one of the top disaster response organizations in the world can be traced back to the training of volunteers. State Baptist convention leaders invest many hours and dollars to provide appropriate disaster relief training. Every three years volunteers are asked to participate in retraining with new equipment, procedures, and leaders. Relationships with other disaster response organizations continue to develop as well.

Someone has said, “The times, they are changing.” It is true. Many aspects of disaster relief have changed in just the last five years. Industry has changed. Technology has changed. The needs of individuals have changed. Communities have changed. The way our nation responds to disaster has changed, especially after September 11, 2001.

Prior to September 11, donations to disaster relief organization were greater than they are today. More organizations have become involved in the disaster response community post September

11. Industries and corporations as well as their employees have become involved. Today, disaster response organizations must compete with many entities, including state governors, who are raising funds and seeking donations following disasters. In addition, the economy has turned downward, and many who have given to disaster response organizations in the past are not in a position to give today. There are more disasters today than ever before. Therefore, we must learn to do more with less. All of this follows the call from Christ to love our neighbor. How?

By you. By being the best trained volunteers ever. By being prepared to respond, no matter what the need. By having the best equipment available with which to respond. By having a safe environment in which to work and having the materials and supplies that you need.

The task continues to grow larger each year. It has been said, “You are only as good as your last response.” It has also been said, “The public was once satisfied when a disaster response organization arrived at the affected site in a few days. Now they question where you were when you arrive in a few hours.”

More people live in disaster prone areas of the United States. Even with the emphasis to build better homes in better locations, there are more families in the line of fire for disaster than ever before in our nation. So, we need you. Thank you for joining the other trained disaster relief volunteers who stand ready to serve.

But please do not forget why we are here. We trace the beginnings of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief to the desire to represent Jesus Christ in the middle of a crisis. The motto of disaster relief used to be “a cup of cold water in Jesus’ name.” In recent years, because of the growth into many different kinds of ministries, the motto has become “Serving Christ in Crisis.”

It is the desire of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief that thousands of volunteers become “salt and light” to this world in which we live and minister. Many of those affected by disaster may not have yet been introduced to Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is necessary for you to be ready to answer the questions “who are you and why are you here?” and be able to share your faith in a very positive, practical way. Southern Baptist Disaster Relief is a tangible way to flesh out your relationship to Jesus Christ.

Therefore, it is necessary for you to understand and apply the material that will be covered in this manual. You are also encouraged to participate in training provided by your state Baptist convention and other organizations (such as the American Red Cross) to broaden your knowledge and understanding of disaster response.

May God bless you as you prepare for the ministry of disaster relief and as you respond in the crisis.

A Brief History of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief traces its beginnings to the actions of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1966, at which time \$50,000 was authorized for the Home Mission Board to use in relief efforts.

In 1967, Hurricane Beulah ravaged the Rio Grande Valley and northern Mexico. Robert E. (Bob) Dixon had just moved from the First Baptist Church of Memphis, Tenn., to work with Royal Ambassadors and Texas Baptist Men. Following the devastation of Hurricane Beulah, Dixon used camp craft skills and turned one-gallon cans into miniature stoves called “buddy burners,” which were used to prepare hot food for people affected by the disaster as well as the volunteer workers. Texas Baptist Men again provided hot meals and the love of God to disaster victims in response to a tornado that cut a deadly swath through Lubbock and to Hurricane Celia’s devastation of Corpus Christi.

The 1971 Mary Hill Davis Texas State Mission Offering allotted \$25,000 for a disaster relief mobile feeding unit for Texas Baptist Men. With these funds Dr. John LaNoue and other volunteers purchased and converted a used 18-wheeler into the first mobile feeding unit. The mobile feeding unit made its maiden voyage in 1972 when a flash flood struck the Seguin/New Braunfels area of central Texas. The unit prepared and served more than 2,500 hot meals to the disaster victims and disaster relief workers.

So began the tradition still followed today by Southern Baptist Disaster Relief—responding quickly to needs, setting up ministry in the midst of devastation, and providing for the physical and spiritual needs of disaster victims and relief workers. As LaNoue said in 1972, “We’re just trying to do what Jesus said to do.”

In 1973, Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers responded to the first international disaster. An earthquake affected Managua, Nicaragua, and volunteers constructed buildings to house seven congregations. In 1974, the 18-wheel mobile feeding unit and volunteers responded to Hurricane Fifi in Honduras.

By 1976 four more state Baptist conventions (Oklahoma, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Kansas/Nebraska) had established disaster relief mobile units and joined Texas in this new area of ministry. By 1988 nine more state Baptist conventions had joined the disaster relief ministry: Tennessee (1979), Alabama (1981), Illinois, Arkansas, North Carolina, Missouri, Kentucky, Florida, and Ohio. A total of 17 mobile units now made up the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief fleet operated by 14 state Baptist conventions. Between 1966 and 1988 Southern Baptists responded to more than 200 disasters domestically and internationally and met the needs of thousands of disaster victims.

As the disaster relief ministry became a part of more state Baptist conventions, the annual state leader meetings at the Brotherhood Commission included times of discussion, planning, and review. Following Hurricane Andrew (August 1992), there was a three-day debrief of the Southern Baptist response. A result of this meeting was the beginning of the development of the Disaster Relief Operational Procedures Manual (DROP) to formalize training and establish

operational protocols. In 1994, the state Baptist convention disaster relief directors officially adopted the DROP Manual during their annual disaster relief meeting. This manual continues to be the foundation of protocols and training and is currently in its third edition.

This also began the tradition of an annual DR Roundtable meeting that takes place during the last week of April. During this time policies and procedures are reviewed and approved by state Baptist convention disaster relief directors. It is also a time of fellowship, training, worship, and networking for state and national leadership. Partner organizations also participate with review of the year's activities and plans for the future.

While the Brotherhood Commission in Memphis, Tennessee had initially been responsible for the disaster relief ministry, in 1997 during the annual Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) meeting in Dallas, Texas, messengers adopted the *Covenant for the New Century*. The SBC was reorganized and three national agencies—the Brotherhood Commission, Radio and Television Commission, and the Home Mission Board—were consolidated into one new national agency called the North American Mission Board (NAMB). One of the nine ministry assignments given to NAMB was “to assist churches in the United States and Canada in relief ministries to victims of disaster.” Disaster relief along with other ministries of the Brotherhood Commission moved to the North American Mission Board located in Alpharetta, Ga

The ministry continued to grow as volunteers returned from the field and shared their experiences with others. The 1995 activity and fleet report of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief documented 95 mobile units and 3,000 trained volunteers ready to respond to needs around the world. The 2004 activity and fleet report documented 497 mobile units and more than 28,500 trained volunteers from 39 state Baptist conventions. Southern Baptist Disaster Relief has units in feeding, communication, chainsaw, rebuild, mud-out, showers, laundry, water purification, child care, and chaplaincy. While each year a report is generated that gives the numbers of volunteers who responded and the services provided, there is no way to know the full scope of ministry actually being done.

As the ministry has grown, the leadership structure has also evolved. In the beginning, a small group of volunteers with a limited ministry capacity was available. A team leader (known as the blue cap) and a few individuals would move into a community and provide hot meals, listening ears, and loving hearts. They would often enlist the members of local congregations in the serving lines. This strategy provided a link between the disaster relief ministry and the local congregation. Once the disaster relief units left the affected community, the local church and its members could continue to provide ongoing ministry to the community. With the signing of the American Red Cross Statement of Understanding in 1986, a more formal leadership team was needed. The state Baptist convention disaster relief directors developed more blue caps (unit directors) to give proper direction and guidance to each unit.

The development of the white cap position was approved by the state Brotherhood directors during the 1994 annual meeting. In addition to the national and state director, provision was made to deploy a white cap to give overall coordination to an area affected by disaster. White caps also provided coordination of multiple units of a particular ministry type (i.e., feeding, child

care, or recovery). It was not unusual to need a team of eight to 12 people to give leadership and coordination to a large, multistate disaster relief response.

Another development in the operational leadership of disaster relief was the institution of the Disaster Operations Center (DOC) in 1999. The DOC is located in the NAMB Volunteer Mobilization Center and becomes operational during a multistate response. The national offsite coordinator is housed at the DOC and provides technical and logistical support of the operation. In addition to the activation and deployment of volunteers and units, the DOC also keeps the official log of the operation. It is staffed by members of the Adult Volunteer Mobilization Unit at NAMB and disaster relief volunteers who are called in to assist.

The institution of the incident command system (ICS) of management during Hurricane Lili in 2002 is a result of the continued growth of the disaster relief ministry. Proper stewardship of resources and good partnership principles led to using a central command system to handle the number of volunteers, state conventions, and types of ministries involved in a large response.

For example, during the September 11, 2001 response to the terrorist attacks in New York City, western Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C., 32 state Baptist conventions were involved with more than 4,000 volunteers ministering during this very critical time in our nation's history. The need for using the ICS model was realized and steps were taken to implement the system. It was fully used during the next two major responses. In 2002, the Hurricane Lili response in Louisiana involved as many as 30 different disaster relief units from 15 state conventions. In 2003, the Hurricane Isabel response in North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware involved 168 units and teams from 24 state Baptist conventions utilizing approximately 2,245 volunteers. This is the largest deployment of units to date in the history of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief.

The growth of the disaster relief ministry is also reflected by the Statements of Understanding (SOU) that Southern Baptist Disaster Relief has signed with partner organizations. The first SOU between Southern Baptist Disaster Relief and the American Red Cross was signed in 1986, when the former Brotherhood Commission was responsible for disaster response. In 1995, an SOU was signed between the International Mission Board and the North American Mission Board to set up a process for Southern Baptists to respond to international disasters. September 11, 2001 marked another historical event for Southern Baptist Disaster Relief. In response to the terrorist attacks, Southern Baptist Disaster Relief and the Salvation Army worked hand-in-hand to staff the kitchens at Ground Zero and Staten Island. The result of this cooperative operation was an SOU signed in 2002. In 2003, Mercy Medical Airlift approached Southern Baptist Disaster Relief about the possibility of establishing an SOU to provide transportation for Southern Baptist disaster relief personnel and small cargo if the air transportation system was grounded by the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Aviation Administration—as happened on September 11, 2001. This agreement was signed in 2004. As of this writing, an official agreement with the Department of Homeland Security is being drafted and will be finalized in the near future.

Since 1967, when a handful of Texans answered God's call, Southern Baptist Disaster Relief has grown into one of the three largest disaster relief agencies in the United States (along with the American Red Cross and Salvation Army). Trained volunteers stand ready to be called out when

disaster strikes anywhere in the world. As Lloyd Jackson of Virginia states, “Disaster relief provides a unique opportunity to translate the message and person of Jesus Christ into flesh and blood as His followers respond in love and compassion to hurting people regardless of circumstances, social status, financial situation, language, political persuasion, theological stance, education or race. ‘As you do unto these, you do unto me’ remains the guideline for ministry to people in and through disaster relief.” To God be the glory!

Chapter One

Sharing Christ in Crisis

The motivation behind Southern Baptist Disaster Relief efforts can be summed up in one phrase: “A cup of cold water in Jesus’ name.” Southern Baptist Disaster Relief is following the example Jesus established when He fed the 5,000 and the 4,000 and His teachings in the parable of the Good Samaritan and Matthew 25:31-46.

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief is Christian love in action. It is meeting the urgent needs of hurting humanity in crisis situations with loving care and a timely response as James 2:15-16 instructs us to do.

The Southern Baptist Disaster Relief logo incorporates two types of ministry, physical and spiritual, exemplified by Christ:



- The arch of the Southern Baptist Convention is our worldwide link.
- The wheat symbolizes physical help.
- The fish symbolizes spiritual help.
- The state name depicts the state Baptist conventions that make up the team.

Why are Southern Baptists involved in disaster relief?

Believers are under scriptural and moral obligation to all mankind to provide a positive witness of the love of Jesus. He calls for Christians to demonstrate love to those affected by disasters through the efficient and immediate use of the resources, talents, and time entrusted to them.

Matthew 25:34-40 (NIV) is Jesus’ description of the judgment where the sheep and the goats are divided: “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’”

Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you in prison and go to visit you?’ The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’”

When humanity is judged, one of the decisive factors will be how well we responded to the needs of our neighbors. We must help those in need around us. The greatest demonstration of our faith in Jesus is that we act like Him. He did not turn individuals away who were hurting. But it is impossible to help everyone. The needs are overwhelming. The problems are so great. How are we to care for those who are in need in the way Jesus would have us? Where can we find the resources, time, and talents for such a large task?

Through the development of a cooperative team effort, those needs can be effectively and efficiently met for the glory of God. We can cooperate with fellow Christians by pooling our resources, time, and talents to meet needs beyond our individual abilities and resources. Southern Baptists have developed such a cooperative system over the past 37 years. Most Southern Baptist state conventions and fellowships have disaster relief ministries. They are varied in their abilities, number of units, and number of trained volunteers. The financial support for these ministries also varies. The cooperative nature of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief allows communities affected by disasters to call for needed resources from wherever they exist.

Disasters affect many people. Christians naturally respond to the hurts of those around them and feel an obligation to minister in the name of Jesus Christ. Christians working together can accomplish much for the glory of God. The example of this kind of cooperation is demonstrated in the New Testament church: “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:42-47, NIV).

The New Testament believers “had everything in common.” Their desire to care for others prompted them to sell “their possessions and goods” and give “to everyone as they had need.”

Disaster relief is now being used as a tool to draw others to faith in Jesus. Each year, as thousands of volunteers respond to disasters, their faith and commitment to Jesus is used by the Holy Spirit as a means to draw others to Him. Through an effective, efficient, and immediate response, resources are pooled to meet the needs of communities. Sometimes the affected population may number in the millions. Meeting the needs of large numbers of disaster victims requires the cooperation of many ministries. Individual efforts are sometimes helpful but can be counterproductive. One person’s efforts can be rendered useless by the misguided efforts of another. Both may mean well, but the greatest good will be accomplished through unity of purpose. A cooperative team effort can harness the desires and energies of individuals into a

productive, effective, and efficient force for Christ. A disaster response team can provide direction for the energy of individual Christians and churches who desire to serve in disaster relief.

Through planning, training, and practicing, disaster response teams can be positioned to provide the leadership and expertise necessary in times of disaster.

Mission action is taking Christian love into all situations and places of need. It is demonstrating concern and becoming involved in meeting the needs of people in the name of Christ. Disaster relief is mission action through the organized efforts of a church or association to minister and witness to people with special needs or circumstances.

The Gospel of Luke describes for us how Jesus organized His followers to provide ministry to a community. He commissioned the twelve to “preach the kingdom of God and heal the sick.” As representatives of Jesus, they were to proclaim His message and meet the needs of those they encountered. Jesus related the same message to 72 of His followers.

In both cases, Jesus assigned His disciples a mission, an area, and a message. It was not enough to preach the kingdom of God. The healing for those in need was to accompany the proclamation of the good news. For a ministry to be the most effective, it needs to be organized.

Southern Baptists have developed plans on the local, associational, state, and national levels for disaster relief. Not only are these plans in coordination with other Baptist entities, they also engage with other organizations like the American Red Cross, The Salvation Army, other voluntary agencies, local government emergency agencies, and the Department of Homeland Security. Families and churches should develop a plan of action to minister to their community in the event of a disaster. They also should plan how they will work with others in ministry in the aftermath of a disaster.

Christ, by His example, set the pattern for us to follow. He told us that our mission to share His love was to be accomplished through the servant role (see Mark 10:43-45). The servant role plays an important part when we respond to a disaster. It is there that we personally are able to share some of our blessings by ministering to the needs of anyone who comes our way. The servant’s heart is flexible and caring.

Volunteers must be careful to guard against a “savior complex” influencing their ministry. The “savior complex” is present when an individual sees himself as the only source of help for those affected by disaster. The “savior complex” will always complicate the task, cause hurt feelings, and prevent effective ministry. This mindset promises unrealistic plans and actions from the caregiver.

When we have a servant’s heart, we are living out the message of 1 John 3:17-18 (NIV): “If any one has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.”

When we care for others we become not just people who talk of missions, but people who put our words into deeds.

Disaster relief has become one of the most exciting ministries in which state conventions, associations, churches, and volunteers can participate. However, responding in a quick, positive way requires planning, organization, and in-depth training.

Chapter Two

The Crisis

Definition of a Disaster

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief defines a disaster as an occurrence that causes human suffering or creates human needs that the victims can not alleviate without assistance. A disaster normally affects more than one person.

Types of Disaster

Typically, there is an element of danger. Some examples of disasters are:

Blizzard	Explosion	Natural gas leak
Boat accident	Famine	Nuclear accident
Bombing	Fire	Power failure
Bridge collapse	Flood	Riot
Chemical spill	High wind	Terrorist attack
Crash	Highway accident	Tidal wave
Drought	Hurricane	Tornado
Drowning	Ice storm	Transportation accident
Earthquake	Industrial accident	Typhoon

Classifications of Disasters

Disasters may be classified in three ways:

- Extent of destruction
- Primary/secondary
- Natural/man-made

Extent of Destruction

Regardless of area affected, the duration of the event and reconstruction help classify disasters as local, widespread, or catastrophic. A fire in a single-family dwelling can be as tragic and disastrous to those involved as a massive earthquake is to its victims.

Primary/Secondary Disasters

Another grouping identifies the disaster by cause. A primary disaster is the initial or triggering event, and a secondary disaster is a consequence of the original occurrence.

For example, earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, and winter storms, although caused by nature, are usually primary. Any of these four initial events might trigger secondary disasters. An earthquake can cause a tidal wave, power failure, dam failure, or fire. Tornadoes often result in power outages. Floods and fires can cause a domino effect of destruction.

Natural/Man-made Disasters

Natural disasters include tornadoes, hurricanes, drought, snow, and ice—any crisis event due to weather conditions. Volcanic eruption and earthquakes are other examples of natural disasters.

Man-made disasters can be of major consequence as well—fires, riots, explosions, transportation accidents, terrorist attacks, and war.

Categories of Disaster Response

Disaster relief also may be divided into three categories based on reaction time and length of response. These categories of disaster response are:

- Emergency relief
- Recovery
- Long-term rebuild

Emergency Relief

Emergency relief is the immediate response to the disaster. Emergency relief usually begins within the first 24 to 48 hours and lasts up to six weeks. Emergency relief may include:

Communication	Feeding
Crisis counseling	First-aid
Emergency medical care	Shelter
Salvage and security	Transportation

Southern Baptists will send feeding units. Local churches can open their doors for clothing and bulk food collection and distribution, family shelter, or child care. Urgent help is needed to salvage what is left and to secure homes with temporary boarding-up of windows and doors. The covering of roofs with plastic or tarps is also included in emergency relief. Local Baptists can help transport victims' household goods and other possessions to safe storage.

Recovery

Recovery follows the emergency relief stage. It may cover a period of a few days to three months. It is marked by the resumption of utilities—electricity, water, gas, telephone, and so on. People start trying to put their lives back into some order. They are still confident about total recovery. Recovery will include a continuation of the services listed under emergency relief but with less urgency. Also, clean-up, repairs, and short-term financial assistance will be conducted during the recovery stage.

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief plays a major role during the recovery stage with feeding, emergency repairs, clean-up, crisis intervention, showers, and child care. Churches in and near the disaster area can serve as distribution centers for bulk food, clothing, and clean-up kits and provide shelter to displaced victims.

Long-term Rebuild

Long-term rebuild usually takes four months to two years or longer. Victims move from confidence to despair and back to determination. Long-term rebuild depends on emotional as well as physical support. Permanent assistance consists of financial grants or loans, reconstruction or major repairs, employment assistance, legal aid, crisis intervention, and insurance adjustments.

Types of Disaster Services

Southern Baptists respond to disasters as individuals, churches, associations, and state conventions. This response comes in a variety of ways. Disaster services involve providing personnel, equipment, and supplies. The following list provides ways volunteers can become involved:

Advisory/Advocacy – Advice and information about disaster services and assistance, including guidance for applying for grants and loans.

Airlift Kitchens – Airlifting kitchen equipment, supplies, and personnel overseas and setting them up for food preparation in a disaster area.

Bulk Items – Collecting, sorting, storing, and distributing such necessities as food, clothing, household goods, personal items, and building materials.

Casework – Assisting individuals and/or families regarding disaster services available to them and tracking their recovery.

Chainsaw Crew – Clearing trees and other major obstructions following tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, and so on. and assisting in the removal of debris.

Child care – Providing temporary emergency child care through a mobile unit or at fixed location such as a church or school.

Clean-up (mud-out or debris pickup) – a unit or team of trained volunteers who are responsible for salvage and clean-up after flooding, fires, windstorms, and so on.

Communication – Equipment and qualified personnel who provide communication capabilities during disasters and disaster relief responses.

Chaplains/Crisis Intervention – Disaster chaplains and other volunteers who provide crisis intervention and care for individuals throughout the disaster cycle.

Crisis Closet – Collection and storage of essential items prior to a disaster, which are available in the aftermath of one-family fires to area emergencies.

Damage Assessment – The preliminary assessment of the disaster including extent of damage, number of homes affected, and so on.

Elder Care – Managing facilities equipped for the elderly, infirm, or other persons unable to care for themselves after a disaster. Elder care may be located at a church, a school, or another suitable facility.

Emergency Medical – Qualified medical personnel (nurses, paramedics, emergency medical technicians, etc.) with equipment and supplies. These individuals often work with other types of units.

Employment Assistance – Assisting in the placement of victims who have been deprived of regular employment in temporary jobs.

Evacuating – Giving assistance to individuals and/or families who need to be evacuated to safer areas. Evacuating may include removal of household goods, business equipment, animals, and people to designated areas.

Financial Assistance – Southern Baptists have not generally been involved in financial grants to disaster victims, although some state conventions and the North American Mission Board (NAMB) may receive funds and make them available for affected churches and families.

Feeding – Food preparation and distribution. Feeding may be from a mobile unit or a fixed location such as a church or school.

Interpreters – Translating or interpreting for those who do not understand or speak English in regard to disaster assistance. This also includes helping those who use American Sign Language.

Legal Aid – Providing indirect assistance on legal matters by referring victims to proper authorities or professionals who offer legal services to victims and churches.

Mud-out – Assisting in the removal of mud and other debris from homes, churches, and other buildings following a flood. Mud-out includes washing and sanitizing areas that have been contaminated by flood water.

Reconstruction – Rebuilding and making permanent repairs to churches, homes, and other buildings affected by disaster.

Repair Team – Volunteer teams doing emergency repairs to provide protection against further damage or vandalism.

Salvage – Removing property to prevent further damage, looting, or vandalism.

Sanitation – Cleaning, washing, and sanitizing food preparation and service equipment at the disaster site to assist a mobile feeding unit or a feeding base without adequate sanitation facilities. Child care units need to have the area, toys, and other supplies sanitized. Sanitizing areas that have been contaminated by flood water is also included.

Security – Boarding up, securing, or guarding damaged property.

Shelter Care – Managing emergency shelters for displaced disaster victims. Shelter care may take place in churches, schools, or other facilities used for the purpose of providing safety and security for those affected by disaster or for the volunteer workers.

Transportation – Carrying passengers or hauling goods. This may be accomplished in vehicles on loan from churches, businesses, or individuals.

Water Purification – Operating a water purification unit and developing a large capacity for water storage.

Levels of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Response

From one concerned church member to a national organization, Southern Baptists bring unique skills and approaches to disaster relief efforts, always with Christ as the prime example. Preparation also requires a unique approach. The Southern Baptist response takes place at seven levels:

Individual or team	State
Church	National
Association	International
Regional	

Individual or Team

Individual volunteers can provide manpower, equipment, or specialized services, such as clean-up or feeding. They provide their own equipment at their own expense and serve in cooperation with the organized disaster relief effort. They may work with or support other groups to provide services to victims.

Volunteers can serve as part of a unit that is designed and equipped to provide specialized services in a disaster area. These units may be self-contained (e.g., feeding unit or communication unit) or designed for use in another facility (e.g., a child care unit serving from a church building).

If you would like to be a part of the disaster relief response, you should make your availability known to the state disaster relief director. You must complete the required training to participate with a specialty unit. Be ready when called to serve.

Individuals are also encouraged to develop a family disaster preparedness plan. By developing a family disaster plan and supply kit, you will be prepared to respond to needs within your family and then the community in the event of a disaster. You can find the Family Preparedness Manual at www.namb.net/dr. It is located on the disaster relief page of the NAMB Web site.

Church

You must decide what your church can do and get your church's approval. It is best to work in cooperation with your state Baptist convention and association. After receiving the church's approval, prepare the church facilities for disaster relief service. A church can provide their facilities and designate space for a specific disaster service, such as a kitchen, a shelter, or storage. Churches should seek to provide friendship, crisis intervention, and encouragement. Prepare to collect, sort, and/or distribute food, clothing, blankets, clean-up kits, and other supplies during a disaster.

Churches should seek the assistance of the state Baptist convention disaster relief director, who will be able to provide teachers, training, and assistance in the development of the church disaster relief plan. Trained disaster relief volunteers from the church can be organized into specialty teams. Examples of the specialty teams include feeding, clean-up, communication, water purification, showers, child care, and so on.

Churches are encouraged to develop a church disaster preparedness plan. You can find the Church Preparedness Manual at www.namb.net/dr. This is located on the disaster relief page of the NAMB Web site.

Association

Associations can provide a full or partial specialty team. Associations can coordinate their member churches' involvement as shelters, feeding units, and so on. Associations can coordinate collection and distribution of food and other commodities. They can coordinate personal ministries during times of disaster. Examples of the personal ministries are child care, elder care, and crisis intervention.

Associations are encouraged to develop an associational disaster preparedness plan. You can find the Association Preparedness Manual at www.namb.net/dr. This is located on the disaster relief page of the NAMB Web site.

Regional

Southern Baptist responses on the regional level involve two or more associations in a coordinated effort. Consider the suggestions for associations listed above.

State

State Baptist conventions develop the state disaster relief response plan and training based on the DROP (Disaster Relief Operational Procedures) Manual.

State conventions determine the types of services, equipment, and organization needed for a state disaster response. State conventions coordinate church, association, and regional units/teams when responding to a disaster within or outside their own state's jurisdiction. State disaster relief directors can deploy units within the state without consulting the national disaster relief director. State conventions coordinate the planning and preparation of associational and regional units as requested.

State Baptist conventions can also deploy units and personnel in multistate, national, and international disasters in response to a request from the national disaster relief director.

Contact your state Baptist convention disaster relief director to volunteer for disaster relief response. All enlistment, training, activation, and deployment of volunteers and units are the responsibility of the state disaster relief director.

National

The North American Mission Board has been given the ministry assignment for disaster relief by the Southern Baptist Convention. NAMB provides resources and manpower coordination during multistate disaster relief responses within North America. Communication during disasters is coordinated by NAMB at the national level. NAMB will assist with training when requested by the state convention disaster relief leadership. Volunteers who respond to multistate/national disasters are responsible for providing their own transportation and other expenses.

International

The International Mission Board (IMB) is responsible for international disaster relief through the Human Needs Consultant in the Office of Overseas Services. Project requests and funds are coordinated by this Richmond-based office. IMB provides funds for disaster responses outside the United States. The NAMB national disaster relief director serves as a consultant for IMB during international responses and provides coordination of the overall disaster relief response. Volunteers who respond to international disasters are responsible for providing their own transportation and other expenses.

Coordinating the Response With Partner Organizations

When a disaster strikes, a local or state official at the disaster site notifies the county or state emergency manager, Federal Emergency Management Agency of the Department of Homeland Security, and other disaster response organizations of the need for assistance. These agencies include Southern Baptist Disaster Relief, the American Red Cross, and the Salvation Army.

The state Baptist convention, the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, an emergency management agency, or other organization will notify NAMB to request assistance if a response is required.

NAMB's national disaster relief director, or other designated person, will begin coordinating the response with the state convention disaster relief director and teams. He will decide, in conference with the partnering organizations, government agents, and the affected state disaster relief director, how many and what type of units to activate. They will also determine where the units will be assigned.

The national disaster relief director, or other designated person, will call other state convention disaster relief directors to put additional units on alert or standby and to give them any pertinent information. The state director begins assembling a response team.

Communication between the different entities—Federal Emergency Management Agency, American Red Cross, Salvation Army, national disaster relief director, state disaster relief director and volunteers—may be initiated in either direction. However, volunteers should not bypass the state disaster relief director by first going to NAMB, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Salvation Army, or the American Red Cross, except as noted below.

Procedures for response by a state disaster relief unit within its own state may differ from a multistate response. Because of close relationships with the local/state emergency agencies, local/state American Red Cross chapters, or Salvation Army, units may be activated without

contact with the national disaster relief director. However, in those cases the national disaster relief director should be informed and asked to provide coordination if other state units are needed.

Stages and Alert System

The system to activate units and teams begins with the affected state placing a call for help. Southern Baptists adopted the following process for the activation of units and volunteers. In addition, pre-event preparation may include communication with state and national disaster relief leadership.

1. **Alert** – the first stage of response at any level—national, state, or individual—is alert. The primary question is “can you go?” If so, it is time to begin making plans. If no immediate response is needed, this stage is updated about every 24 hours.
2. **Standby** – the second state of response is standby. At this point, there is a probable need for a response. The unit/team will depart as soon as it is requested to respond. Prepare all personnel and equipment to leave immediately. If there is some delay, this stage will be updated every 12 hours. If the unit/team is not asked to respond within 48 hours, they may revert to alert or be taken off the potential response plan.
3. **Go/No Go** - The third stage of response is go/no go. If the decision is no go, then the status of the unit/team may revert to standby, alert, or it may be taken off the response plan entirely. Go means a response is definite. The disaster relief unit will move within six hours or less.

The following vital information is given or will be coming:

- The specific circumstances at the location
- The location and how to get there or to the staging area
- The specific assignment of service
- The contact person to report to
- A reminder to report to the Disaster Operations Center (DOC) at NAMB every four hours while en route with the estimated time of departure and arrival (ETD and ETA) and the unit contact and phone number
- Any other pertinent information available at the time of deployment about the projected response

The next step is when the state director activates the state units/teams, giving its members essential details and determining the number of volunteers needed along with their shift length.

A designated person will begin contacting other volunteers to go as relief teams at intervals determined by the circumstances—usually five days to a week. The incident commander and state disaster relief director will coordinate the location and length of service of all volunteers.

4. **Closing** – The final stage of response is closing. The mobile unit is no longer needed at that location. It may be reassigned to another location or allowed to return home. The decision to close or terminate will be made in collaboration with the affected state disaster relief director and the incident commander.

Chapter Three

Ministering in Crisis

Guidelines for Disaster Relief Volunteers

The following suggestions will improve your usefulness as a disaster relief volunteer and make your experience more satisfying:

- If you are employed, discuss your situation with your boss. Be sure your absence in times of disaster response is fully approved.
- Look over the “what to take” checklist (Appendix Five) and secure the basic items. Add any items you might need for your personal health, safety, comfort, and efficiency.
- Keep your insurance information with your disaster relief information and gear. Each volunteer is expected to have insurance in case of accident, injury, or illness. Personal health insurance is the responsibility of the volunteer. See the release and indemnity agreement (Appendix Four).
- Make arrangements with family, church, civic clubs, and so on for someone to fulfill your responsibilities while you are on a response.
- Keep phone numbers related to your state disaster relief network where you can find them.
- Participate often in disaster relief projects like training, non-disaster operations, maintenance, and renovations.
- In times of disaster, contact your state disaster relief director or designee to volunteer for a response.

Being a Disaster Relief Volunteer

The Southern Baptist Disaster Relief organization is multistate, multiracial, and multitalented. Yet there are many elements in common.

- Disaster relief volunteers should be people with a number of Christian qualities: patient, caring, possessing a spirit of love and concern with a desire to share Christ with others.
- Disaster relief volunteers are expected to participate in training events and learn about disaster conditions and how to deal with the situations they will face.
- Disaster relief volunteers must follow the directions of those in charge.
- Disaster relief volunteers must be willing to provide leadership as the need arises and assignments are made.
- Disaster relief volunteers must be versatile and flexible in their work. Team members are called on the basis of skills that are needed and placed according to needs, talents, and availability.
- Disaster relief volunteers need to arrange time to be available.
- Disaster relief volunteers should be prepared to use every opportunity to share their faith in Christ.
- Disaster relief volunteers must possess:
 - Spiritual strength – be consistent in faith
 - Physical strength – the work day is long and strenuous

- Moral strength – in speech, attitude, and actions

Preparing to be a Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Volunteer

Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteers **DON'T**:

- Expect favors or preferential treatment
- Expect to be the first called
- Expect to work with only your group
- Expect to work with the same people

Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteers **DO**:

- Make adjustments as needed
- Understand their limitations
- Inform leaders of their special interests and abilities
- Inform leaders of their preferred work

Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteers should be prepared to recognize stress in themselves. Disaster response conditions are stressful. Volunteers will be required to work long hours under difficult conditions. Volunteers should monitor their frequency of rest, length of work time, personal nutritional needs, shelter, privacy, and personal support system while serving in a response.

A volunteer needs a positive mental, social, and spiritual attitude to take on the task of providing physical assistance. As a volunteer you have the responsibility for your own personal preparation, motivation, attitude, assessment, availability, participation, approach, training, and improvement.

Take a personal survey to check your attitude.

Do I have a servant's heart or am I thinking about my needs much of the time?

Am I willing to take directions from others or am I resentful of demands made on me?

Do I know how to be part of the team or do I need to be in charge?

Am I going to help people in need or do I have a personal agenda?

Am I willing to work wherever needed or am I inflexible?

As a result of this self-examination, a volunteer should know if their attitude allows them to be an effective disaster relief volunteer.

Training for the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Volunteer

Disaster volunteers will find it helpful to participate regularly in state Baptist disaster relief training. Even if you have already had training, you can help others by sharing your experiences. Disaster relief volunteers must be retrained every three years.

Over the years, the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief logo has come to mean quality service that makes a difference. Pioneers in Southern Baptist Disaster Relief have earned a reputation for the

yellow cap volunteers and for what the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief logo stands for. To keep the integrity intact, the logo may be worn only by trained volunteers and only at times of training or during a disaster response.

Experience has shown the need for a standard orientation and training for disaster relief volunteers. There are some general training requirements for a person to be recognized as a Southern Baptist Disaster Relief worker.

States may expand their training requirements but should always include the following courses of study:

- *Involving Southern Baptists in Disaster Relief*
- State convention disaster relief manual
- Unit specific training
 - Child care Unit
 - Communication Unit
 - Disaster Chaplain
 - Feeding Unit
 - Public Information Officer
 - Recovery Unit (chainsaw, mud-out, and/or repair)
 - Shower Unit
 - Water Purification Unit

Additional training may include:

- Introduction to American Red Cross Module
- Introduction to The Salvation Army Module
- Introduction to The Federal Emergency Management Module
- *Spiritual Preparation for Disaster Relief*
- “Hope in Crisis” tract
- Standard first aid/CPR
- Unit Director Manual
- Incident Command System Manual

Safety Guidelines for Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Volunteers

Stay in good health and good physical condition. Have regular physical examinations. Consult your physician about your involvement in disaster relief. Get recommended inoculations. Take medications as prescribed by your physician. If possible, have a backup prescription order for medications.

Work within your strengths and limitations: physical (strength and health), emotional (stress management), and mental (knowledge and skills). Take personal health items that are helpful to your comfort and well-being. Wear clothing, footwear, and special equipment suited to the task and conditions you will face. Avoid extended sitting or standing in the same position, constant exposure to the sun, and prolonged exposure to water, heat, and cold.

Eat regularly and drink plenty of water. Rest when you can. Do not base your work load on that of another person. Pace yourself. Sleeping will be difficult. Use caution in danger areas where you may encounter heavy traffic, broken glass, nails, and downed electrical lines. Report all injuries to the first aid coordinator. Complete personal and medical information prior to or immediately after arriving at the disaster site (see Appendix One). Become familiar with policy and procedures for on-site illnesses and injuries.

Disaster by its definition involves turmoil and confusion. Normal procedures have been totally disrupted. Therefore, every precaution must be taken by the response worker to ensure safety. Here are some suggestions to help protect the safety of workers:

- Before entering a building, examine the structure for damage and potential hazards.
- Before entering damaged buildings, be sure that all utilities (electricity, gas, telephone, cable, etc.) have been turned off. Check with utility companies if necessary.
- Always assume downed electrical lines are energized until power companies notify you they have been turned off. Even then, use care around lines since they can become energized due to generators improperly used in homes. They may also become entangled in equipment or with your body.
- Wear safety equipment as provided and required. Heavy-soled or steel-toed shoes, gloves, and hard hats should be used in disaster areas.
- Carry adequate lighting when entering dark buildings.
- Do not use power tools unless you are properly trained.
- When using chainsaws or power tools, use safety equipment and do not work alone.
- Do not enter flooded homes or basements without probing the area to determine where there are holes or hidden objects.
- Always protect yourself against snakes, insects, and other animals during clean-up work.
- Never drink or use water until it is verified as safe.
- Take care to rest and guard yourself against over-exertion.
- If you are on medication, be sure to have an adequate supply and take it as prescribed.
- Store tools, ladders, and supplies in safe and secure places.
- Make safety a priority.

Ethical Guidelines for Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Volunteers

Take care not to damage the group effort by careless words or actions. Each person must remember that he or she represents the Lord and the church. All attitudes and actions should demonstrate the teachings of Christ.

Take time to listen to victims. Never get so busy in response to physical needs that you forget the people you have come to help. In most cases, the victim's greatest need is having someone listen to their story. However, do not attempt to meet physical or personal needs you are not trained to handle. Always be willing to refer a victim or problem to a qualified person if it is too much for you to handle.

Respect the property of victims. Things that may seem worthless to you may be precious to someone else.

Never accept contributions from the people you help. If they ask to make a contribution, refer them to an address where they may send a donation.

Be sensitive to the fact that information shared by a victim in confidence should remain so. Respect the privacy of every individual.

When taking pictures of disaster damage, be sensitive to the people involved. If they are present, always ask permission.

When sharing information about help available to victims, be sure your information is accurate. When sharing information about a disaster situation, be sure your facts are accurate. Do not participate in spreading rumors that circulate following a disaster.

Workers have a unique opportunity to put their faith into action. Oftentimes ministry opens the door for personal witnessing. Be prepared to share faith in Jesus Christ as the opportunity arises.

Chapter 4

Compassion in Crisis

Types of Victims

There are three types of victims the disaster worker may encounter:

- Direct
- Indirect
- Hidden

The direct victim lives in the area affected by the disaster and has suffered losses.

The indirect victim lives on the fringe of the disaster area, near direct victims. The indirect victim may suffer minor inconveniences or guilt feelings because of others' losses or have mixed feelings—sorrow for victims but happy his family was not affected. Early on he or she may take an active role in relief efforts. Or his or her reaction to the disaster may include leaving the area.

The hidden victim is the disaster relief worker. Volunteers tend to be caring people who do not like to see other people hurting, so they take on the burdens of the victims. As they internalize the pain, they may become victims themselves. Volunteers can avoid this by discussing these feelings during the daily debriefing. Disaster chaplains or crisis interveners present at the work site can help volunteers cope with their feelings.

Phases of Emotions in a Disaster Relief Response

Disaster victims commonly go through four distinct emotional phases in coping with a disaster:

- Heroic
- Honeymoon
- Disillusionment
- Reconstruction

Heroic – The heroic phase occurs during and immediately after the disaster. People respond in almost superhuman ways to save lives and property. A desire to help others develops and much energy is expended. The heroic phase may last from a few hours to a few days. The heroic phase corresponds to the emergency relief stage.

Honeymoon – During the honeymoon phase victims share common experiences and losses. They are encouraged to anticipate help. They engage in clean-up and relief efforts. The honeymoon phase may last one week to six months and corresponds to the recovery stage.

Disillusionment – During the disillusionment phase victims feel disappointment, anger, resentment, and impatience about delays when help does not materialize. They expected normalcy much sooner. The disillusionment phase can last two months to two years.

Reconstruction – During the reconstruction phase the victims finally realize they will be solving many of their problems themselves. Restoration begins to reaffirm their beliefs. Healthy growth occurs. This phase extends for six months and beyond and corresponds with the long-term rebuild stage.

Victim Reactions at the Three Stages of Response

Earlier in this manual we learned that disaster relief efforts may be classified in three stages: emergency, recovery, or long-term rebuild. We will now look at typical victim reactions during these three stages.

Emergency Relief

The victims' reaction during the emergency relief period will depend upon the severity of the disaster and their personal losses. Power and water service may be interrupted and landmarks destroyed or life may return to "business as usual."

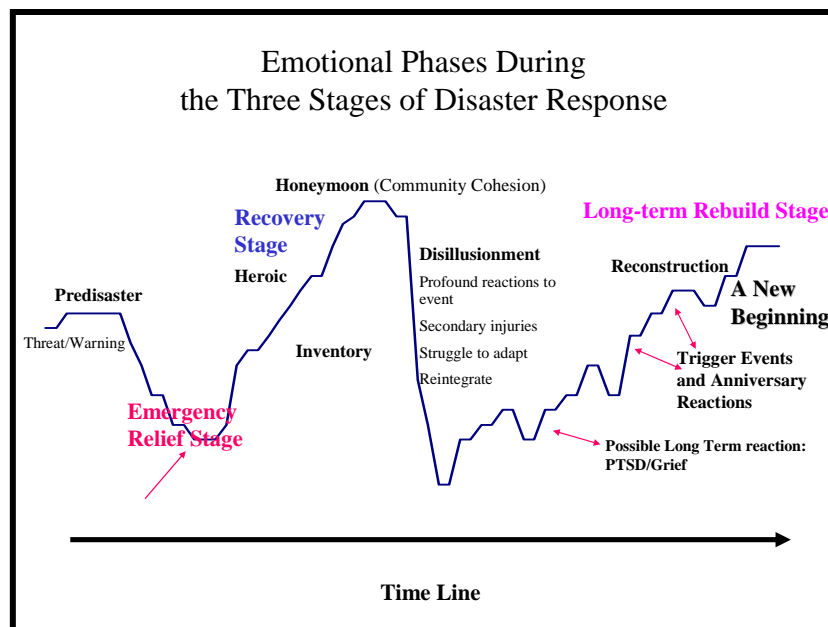
People tend to repress emotions. They may work until they reach the point of exhaustion and go without sleep, adequate food or proper medical treatment. They must protect and salvage what is left and try to recover what has been lost. People often report a feeling of need for self-preservation in order to assist other family members, protect property, and salvage possessions. They tend to be friendly, talkative, and want to share their experiences.

Recovery

During the recovery period relief workers are on the scene. Victims begin to slow down. Emotions surface. Decisions become difficult. They expect more from relief workers than may be possible. They need someone to listen to their stories.

Long-term Rebuild

Long-term rebuild may begin one to six months after the disaster strikes. Many disaster relief agencies have left the community. Many people in the community are not assisting with recovery. Victims tend to be frustrated. They feel they should be back in their homes. Their emotions range from frustration, to anger, to pessimism, to a state of fault-finding, to depression. They begin to think they are forgotten and that nobody cares.



Psychology of Disaster

Disaster relief agencies contact few of the actual victims, even in the most extensive, destructive disasters. Volunteers who provide direct ministry to the people affected by disaster can provide valuable assistance when they understand something of the stress caused by a crisis. Victims suffer maximum stress when the crisis comes suddenly, causes widespread destruction, results in death or injury, occurs at night, and creates mountains of uncertainty.

Stress is minimized when the event is a natural disaster and victims can blame it on unavoidable circumstances. If the disaster requires an immediate response, many times the stress is lessened. The stress caused by a disaster strengthens a community's identity. Disasters reduce societal differences within a community and creates a "here and now" mentality.

Stress levels also can be affected by a victim's prior involvement in a disaster. Experience alters reaction, for better or worse. Prior experience also provides a false sense of security. Priorities for action may emerge more quickly. Prior disaster experience makes pre-event warnings more credible and reduces role conflicts. Experience helps organize reactions and responses more effectively and lessens the duplication of messages.

Psychologically, a disaster will absorb peoples' attention (victims, relief workers, and the public). Disasters also provide an emotional release because other stresses subside. Personal and community milestones are developed. A disaster can provide a sense of renewal due to a break with the past.

Psychological reactions to disaster vary. People tend to underestimate a disaster's scope. Denial is generally the first reaction. People will personalize the event. Women with dependents have more problems adapting in the early periods of crisis than others.

Dealing with the Emotions of Victims

In a verbal or nonverbal way, volunteers should get this message across: "It's OK for you to express your anger (or confusion, desperation, etc.). I will take it seriously." This can be conveyed by attentiveness and acceptance; by a soft, slow, calm tone; and by calm, gentle movements. Your concern may be expressed by a relaxed but attentive posture and eye contact and by a comfortable distance to the victim (not too close, but near enough for conversation).

The emotion is vented and allowed to flow away. A relationship of mutual trust and caring begins, which is the basis for helping. You need to show you care enough to let the victim be expressive, even if it is unpleasant for you. This conveys your acceptance of the victim as an individual of worth and potential, which may be one of the biggest needs he or she has at the time. If you do that, you will earn the right to help the person in need. If you are not able to provide adequate help, the right thing to do is to refer the person to someone who can. This may not be easy, but you have made a move in the right direction.

Disaster-Related Stress

A crisis is a temporary state during which a person's usual methods of coping do not seem to be working. People tend to feel anxious and upset because of their apparent helplessness in dealing with the situation. A crisis may erupt when a person is faced with a problem that calls on resources or problem-solving abilities that have not been needed before. In other words, they lack experience in dealing with the situation.

Disaster-related stress is different. Survivors perceive disasters as highly dangerous and life-threatening to themselves and their families. Survivors may fear the recurrence of a similar situation. Family members often jointly experience the terror-filled moments of the impact and extended recovery. Disasters cause a sense of helplessness and powerlessness over the forces that caused the crisis. Disasters cause a communitywide perception of destruction and disruption. Disasters result in a sense of loss of great magnitude and diversity.

Common reactions of survivors/victims are:

- Concern for basic survival
- Grief over loss of loved ones and prized possessions
- Anxiety over separation from family and friends
- Regressive behaviors
- Anxiety about relocation and isolation from home and community
- Need to express feelings about experiences during the disaster
- Need for a sense of community in the aftermath
- The desire to help others

Some of the emotional/psychological reactions to disasters that survivors/victims and disaster relief volunteers might experience are: numbness, excitability, sleep disorders, headaches, impatience, guilt feelings, physical fatigue, an emotional drain, phobias related to the event, difficulty concentrating at work, exhaustion, hyper-alertness, excessive sleep, disorientation, frustration, feelings of isolation, ambivalence, excessive preoccupation with injury or death, traumatic memories of the event, nervousness, hypersensitivity, nightmares, helplessness, anger, separation anxiety, and fear of relocation.

Victims of disasters may develop anxieties about a number of potential problems:

- A loss of trust in the natural order of life, which results in confusion
- A loss of faith, which may cause a theological crisis
- A loss of a sense of security
- A loss of hope as a result of despair due to being forced to live without necessities or luxuries
- A loss of privacy
- A loss of ambition and sociability
- A loss of normal family roles and functioning, of prestige and status, of control over the immediate environment, and the loss of symbolic values, which cannot be measured
- A loss of faith in personal invulnerability

These losses may result in fear of a recurrence of a disaster. Other fears can include fear of the future, fear of financial difficulties, and the fear of never recovering.

Ways to Meet a Crisis

A productive way to deal with crisis means facing the fact that there is a problem. Attempt to understand the situation. Open channels of communication with family, friends, and church members. Understand there will be feelings of guilt, anxiety, or resentment.

Consider positive ways of viewing the crisis situation. Separate the changeable from the unchangeable and accept what cannot be changed. Explore practical ways to cope with the problems. Accept responsibility for coping, even if the circumstances are beyond your control. Draw closer to family and friends. Pray about the matter. Confess your honest feelings about the situation. Remember God is sovereign—He is aware of the crisis and concerned about us.

An unproductive way to deal with crisis is to deny a problem exists. Other ways include evading the issue with alcohol, refusing to seek or accept help from anyone, hiding, feelings of guilt, grief, anger, brooding on the negative, adding to the confusion by staying completely confused, letting someone else solve the problems, blaming others, expecting others to take full responsibility, deserting family and friends, turning away from God, or convincing yourself the crisis is God's punishment on the world.

Basic Listening Skills

The most important response Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers can make is to meet the personal and spiritual needs of the people affected. Providing food, clothing, housing, and clean-up is necessary. However, until we give the personal touch, we are not effectively ministering. In crisis situations we find that people respond in many ways. Some find strength of character they never thought possible while others may collapse almost immediately.

A crisis brings on new and increased tensions. Tempers are short. People want immediate results and refuse to wait for response groups to take action. The disaster relief volunteer may become the one who catches the anger, urgency, or desperation. The disaster relief volunteer also may become the one who can make a difference.

In the midst of the confusion, the disaster relief volunteer may find an appropriate time and way to facilitate healing by offering a spiritual response. Remember, in every action we are working to share Christ and His love. Being a good listener can afford the volunteer the opportunity to produce healing of spirit and soul. Therefore, Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteers must be good listeners.

Good listeners will:

- Look at the person and give them complete attention.
- Give occasional responses—nodding your head, changing expressions, making verbal responses, and asking questions. This lets the person know you understand.

- Paraphrase and ask for clarification. This often helps the victim see a different viewpoint. However, do not put words in the victim's mouth.
- Avoid interrupting, unless there is real confusion that jeopardizes your ability to help.
- Tolerate and accept new ideas. Do not condemn.

Crisis Intervention Guidelines

The purpose of crisis intervention is to offer a sense of caring presence: to hold a hand or offer a friendly shoulder to cry on. Crisis interveners share a lump in the throat and weep with those who weep. Crisis interveners will affirm that sympathy is "two hearts tugging at one load."

The primary goal of crisis intervention is to provide temporary intervention which enables the person to return to effective, independent functioning as soon as possible.

A crisis is temporary. It can be a turning point in an individual's life and timely help is crucial. Crisis intervention is very practical in its application. The helper concentrates on the current situation, encouraging the victim to identify points of the problem as it is being experienced.

Because the victim might have difficulty focusing on the problem and identifying alternatives, the helper uses a direct approach to return the person to clearer thinking. Emotional support is provided and other sources of support in the individual's social network are identified. The helper models calm and organized problem-solving skills.

Crisis interveners may include Southern Baptist volunteers, men and women who have intervention skills and training, and those who are willing to learn. They may come from the ranks of pastors, chaplains, professional counselors, and educators.

Remember that disaster victims are best viewed as normal people whose lives are disrupted by severe stress. Whenever possible involve professional and nonprofessional counselors from the affected area. The caregiver must be willing and able to be innovative in providing services to victims where they are rather than in traditional or professional settings. A "search and find" approach is preferred to "wait and treat." Avoid using labels like "emotional problems." Focus on affirming normal reactions to crisis and offering help. "Victim assistance" and "human services" are safe terms. Intervention should begin as soon as possible. Concentrate on problem solving or readjustment and restoration to normal life. More serious emotional difficulties requiring referral and evaluation are most likely to surface in later phases of disaster relief. Respect confidentiality and privacy. A caregiver is in a privileged position. Crises heighten the need to self-disclose. Confidentiality should never be violated except in extreme emergencies where the law mandates disclosure. The volunteer crisis intervener should guide the victim to employ skills and practices that meet the needs of the crisis situation.

Functional vs. Dysfunctional Families and the Ability to Cope

The functional family has a history of cohesiveness and unity. It is a family that sees itself as a resource for dealing with stress. It perceives its members as survivors and has determined ahead of time to cope with threats to the family. The functional family sees preparation as generic and faces the reality of death and severe injury to its members. It adjusts roles and responsibilities and is careful not to isolate nor create dependency in a family member. It knows its limitations in dealing with severe trauma.

Functional families have fewer parent-child conflicts. They tend to be inclusive, open to outside resources, and less likely to experience substance abuse. A functional family is less likely to exhibit aggressive behavior and better equipped psychologically and spiritually for disaster.

The dysfunctional family has a history of being overwhelmed. It tends to let serious problems go untreated and resigns itself to hopelessness. It has not envisioned problems of a disaster or other emergencies and procrastinates about preparation. It discourages expressions of grief and is rigid in responsibility of roles. It is intolerant to the reactions and needs of family members and insists on underestimating or denying their problems. Dysfunctional families tend to have more parent-child conflicts and to be closed to outside resources. They are more likely to succumb to substance abuse and are more likely to exhibit violent behaviors. Dysfunctional families are progressively more at risk psychologically to disasters.

Chapter 5

Organizing For Crises

Job Descriptions for Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Team Members

The following list of job descriptions will help you understand the organization of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief. Each person on a unit or team has an important responsibility. There are those who are placed in leadership positions. As a Southern Baptist involved in disaster relief, you should understand the disaster relief organization as well as the unit structure. Involvement in state training events is the only way to fully understand it because every state organization is slightly different.

National Disaster Relief Director—the individual designated by NAMB to direct disaster relief response efforts on a national level and to coordinate disaster relief responses at the request of an affected state. When requested to do so by an affected state, the national director may direct the total Southern Baptist disaster relief response in that state (or convention) or enlist a qualified person to do so.

State Disaster Relief Director—the person designated by the state convention to develop and implement disaster response for that convention. In the event of a disaster, the affected state disaster relief director will direct the total Southern Baptist disaster response for that state convention.

Incident Commander—the person designated to direct the overall daily operations of the disaster relief response. He or she will use state and national disaster relief directors to develop a command staff and general staff as needed to provide appropriate leadership for the response.

Offsite Coordinator—the person serving outside the disaster area who is designated to direct preparation and provide logistics in the home state to keep the disaster relief teams or mobile units operating at full efficiency.

Unit Director (Blue Hat)—the person designated to direct the overall daily operation of a disaster relief unit or team.

Lead Workers—the people designated to direct one part of the daily operation of a disaster relief unit for a period of time (e.g., chief cook, inventory person, mechanic).

Call-out or Notification Coordinator—the person designated to contact volunteers to enlist a disaster response team.

Recognized Volunteer—a member of a disaster relief unit or team who has completed the minimum required training within the past three years.

Volunteer Coordinator—the person assigned to each work location to coordinate local volunteer response. This person may work at a unit site or in the surrounding community.

The Command Center

When out-of-state units or teams come to the affected state, the operation becomes a “multistate” response, and the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief network is activated. Terms of agreement between the state disaster relief director and NAMB specify working relationships for the affected state, NAMB, and assisting states. Agreements with the American Red Cross, The Salvation Army, Mercy Medical Airlift, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) are in effect.

The state disaster relief director directs the response for the affected state. If the state does not have disaster relief capability or the disaster relief director declines or is unable to take responsibility, the state convention may look to the national disaster relief director for assistance. He may serve as the incident commander or enlist another qualified person.

The incident commander is the lead Southern Baptist representative in coordinating disaster relief response within the state with the organizations listed above. He establishes a command center, an adequate building as close to the damaged area as possible, which has space for the scope of the operation (food facilities, water, electricity, telephones, basic office equipment, and sanitation). The state and/or national disaster relief director will provide a leadership team to the incident commander. The incident command team will have span and control authority to manage the disaster relief response.

The incident command team sets up daily operations and arranges supply lines for food and other materials and equipment. They establish lines of communication, the types of equipment that will be operational at the command center and the unit sites, the procedures for communication to and from other responding organization’s headquarters, the procedures for reporting to and from the state and/or national director, and the other necessities for optimal operation at each work location.

The incident command team relays to the state and/or national director any need for additional units, the alert status for each disaster site or unit, the changes in location of units, and the daily reports from the units. The incident command team contacts each work site daily, either in person or by talking to the unit director on the phone. They coordinate placement of Southern Baptist disaster relief teams and units with other responding organizations and local government jurisdiction officers.

The incident commander follows Southern Baptist network guidelines for dealing with victims, volunteers, other disaster relief organizations, the public, government agencies, the news media, support staff, and all others who look to him for assistance with the response.

Chain of Command

In most state conventions, planning and preparation for disaster relief has been assigned to a state convention staff member or designated volunteer. The chain of command in multistate disaster relief responses among Southern Baptists reflects the breadth of the region over which a director

has responsibility. Every attempt is made to protect the autonomy of each level of Southern Baptist polity while structuring the most efficient organization possible.

The following reflects the recommended chain of command for state disaster plans:

Southern Baptist IC Organization

