MASS FATALITY INCIDENTS (MFI): THE ROLE OF FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGISTS AND DMORT IN MFI

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MFIs defined:

- "a relative term and hinges upon the capabilities of the local community to administer to the injured and dead" (Steadman 2009);
- are "when the number of dead exceeds the capacity of local agencies to manage them" (Sledzik and Willcox 2009)
- All are unique, but share commonalities

FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGISTS AND MASS FATALITY INCIDENTS

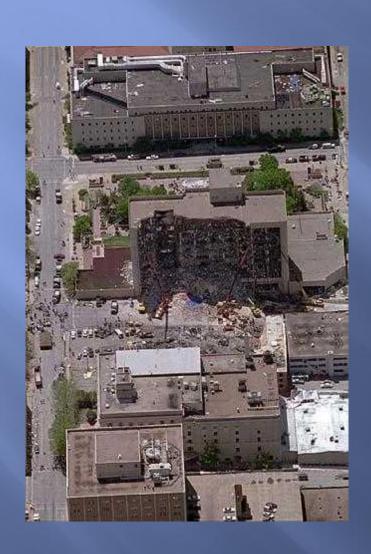
The Big Thompson Flood, Colorodo (1976)



Hardin Cemetery Flood, Missouri (1993)



Terrorist Attacks





Noble, Georgia Crematorium (2002)





Spring 2005: The crematory site has been cleared, as shown in the photo above.

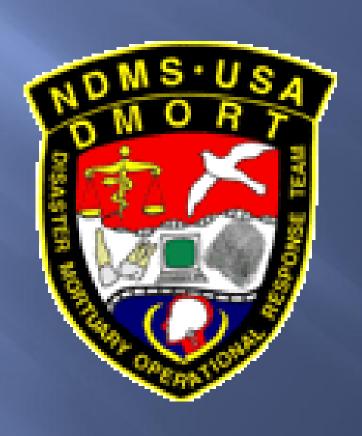
Hurricane Katrina, 2005



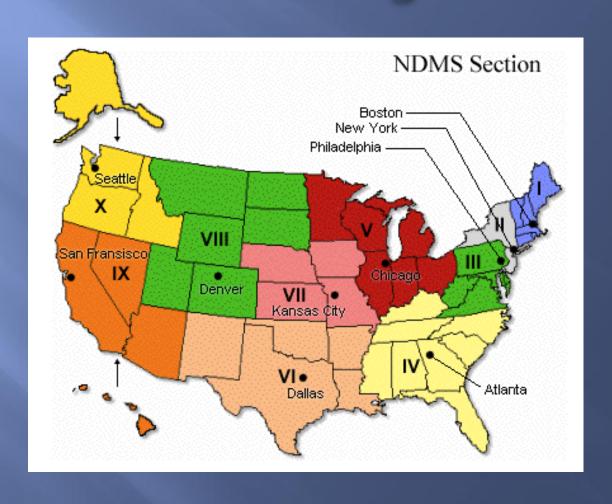
Port-au-Prince, Haiti (February, 2010)



DMORT (Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team)



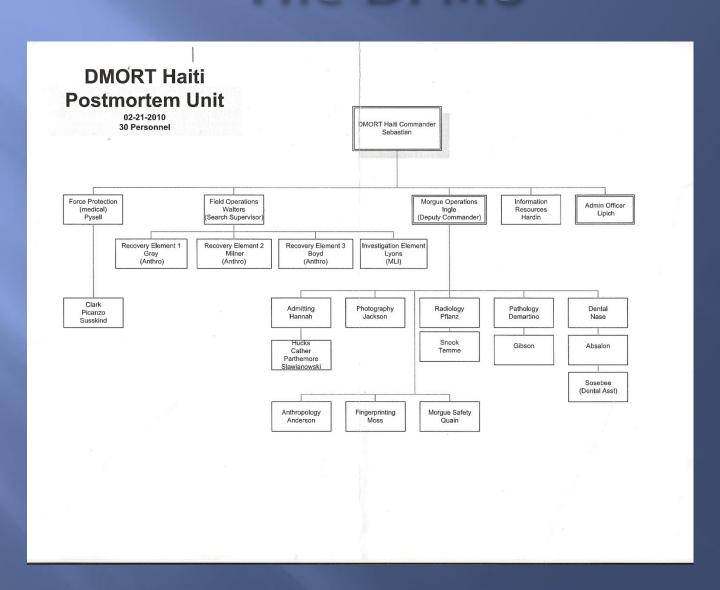
DMORT Regions



DMORT OPERATIONAL PROTOCOL:

Incident Command System

The DPMU











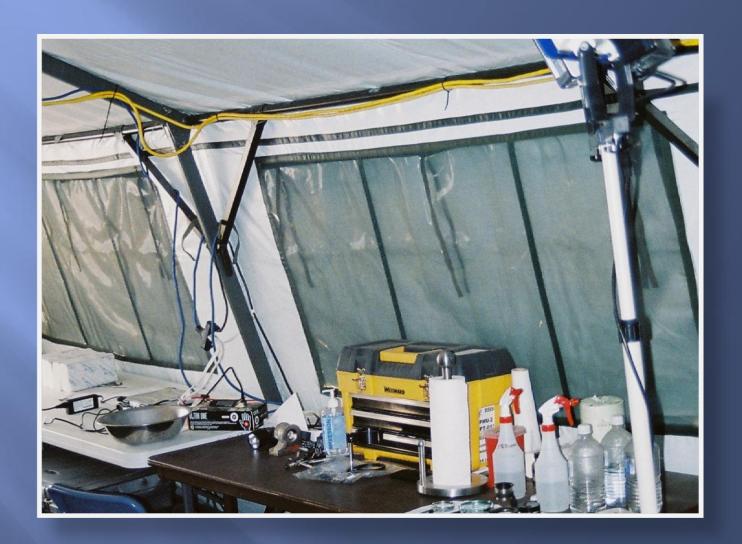
DMORT Specialists

- Medical Examiners
- Medicolegal Death Investigators
- Forensic Anthropologists
- Forensic Dentists
- X Ray Technicians
- Funeral Home Personnel
- Photographers
- Fingerprint Specialists
- Family Assistance Center















Morgue Data Sheets

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Difficulties in MFIs

- Safety and security
- Loss of infrastructure
- Organizational chaos
- Miscommunication between agencies
- Leadership questions/issues
- Collection and retention of evidence
- Chain of custody
- Safe and humane recovery of deceased
- Family counseling and communication

Port-au-Prince, Haiti







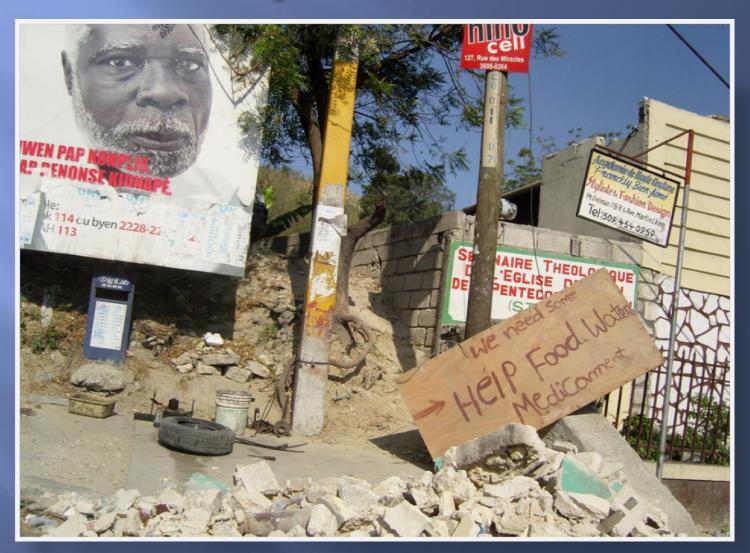
Loss of Infrastructure







Organization of Chaos







Humane and Timely Recovery of Deceased



Hotel Montana





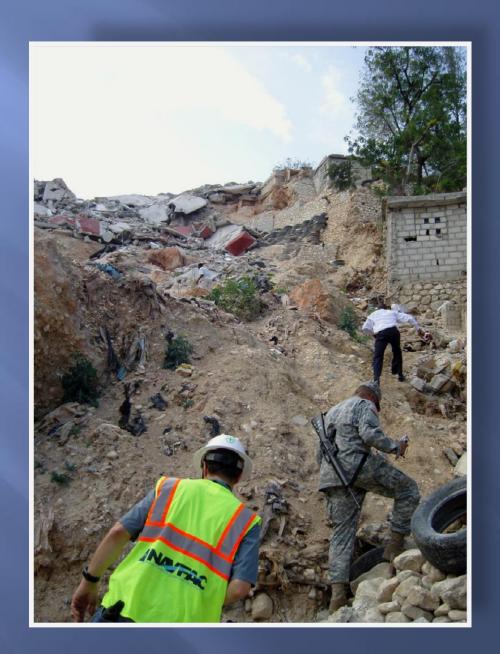
Safe and Accurate Recovery of Deceased

















Need for Reconnaissance and Information



Secondary Burials













Managing the MFI

- Recognition of need for external assistance
- Transition from Search and Rescue to Search and Recovery
- Protocol for search, recovery, analysis, and identification of human remains and associated evidence
- Communication with and counseling for families

Forensic Anthropology Skills in MFIs

- Devise protocol for search and recovery of human remains
- Locate, recognize, and recover human remains, especially those burned and fragmented
- Maintain context and chain of custody
- Train search personnel to recognize fragmented and burned human remains
- Provide field assessment of condition of remains
- Assist with morgue analysis of remains and victim identification



Haiti-DMORT (February, 2010)

