

#NC Incident Overwatch: Statewide “Rally” Point

North Carolina Department of Public Safety – North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM) led the charge in deploying Bridge4PS as a common collaboration platform throughout the State of North Carolina. Beyond user onboarding, NCEM developed Concept of Operations (ConOps), Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and a governance structure to guide app usage.

They established an open channel in the Bridge4PS Channels Directory called “#NC Incident Overwatch” where they could easily share general information with Bridge4PS users across the state. They create individual rooms for specific operations including Hurricane Isaias, the Republican National Convention, Elections and other incidents that happen around the state.

“The information conveyed in this channel has not only helped to improve effective response coordination but also aided in the saving of lives and property of the citizens of North Carolina.”

Charles Laird
NC Program Specialist



Highlights

Event overview:

- Statewide Collaboration
- ConOps & SOPs
- Governance

Operational benefits:

- Improved Response Coordination
 - Streamlined Communication
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“Bridge4PS has transformed how we communicate during incident response in North Carolina and become a critical communications tool statewide.”

Greg Hauser
NC SWIC/ESF2 Lead

The incident overwatch channel is a “public” channel that serves primarily as the collaboration “rally point” for in-state and out-of-state responders to start and/or discover incidents occurring in North Carolina. A user may post about something occurring in their jurisdiction for general situational awareness of other users just like a “hailing channel” on an LMR system. If an incident is going to generate a lot of messages or require state-level support, they create a separate channel for interested stakeholders to join. To name the channel, they utilize a similar naming convention to WebEOC:

“NC YYYY.MM.DD [Name of Incident]”

Example: NC 2018.09.08 Hurricane Florence.

After a channel is created, they post a link in the #NC-Incident-Overwatch channel by using the Tagging (#) feature. This allows those interested to easily link directly to the channel. For security sensitive incidents, the channel can be set to hide the content to control access to content. A password can be added to control access to the channel without administrators to manage members.

The channel is used to communicate critical information to agencies large and small. It is used regularly for both planned events and short or no notice incidents. The foresight of leadership to conduct statewide communications planning and the resulting Governance Models and Standard Operating Procedures has led to a model for comprehensive, statewide collaboration that is recognized by public safety officials across the nation. The willingness to share the lessons learned from their efforts with the entire public safety community has advanced the adoption of secure, interoperable, public safety collaboration efforts to a level that would not have been otherwise possible without their contributions.

Points-of-Contact

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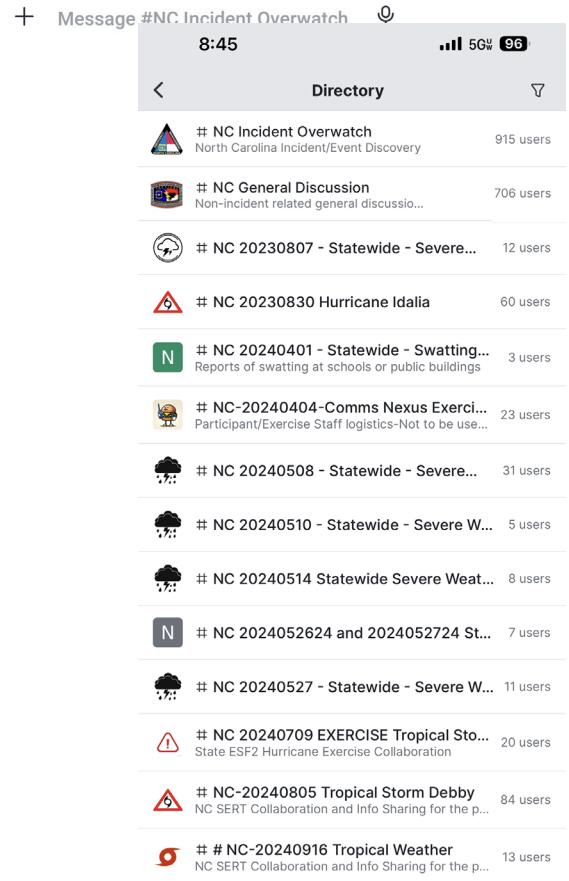
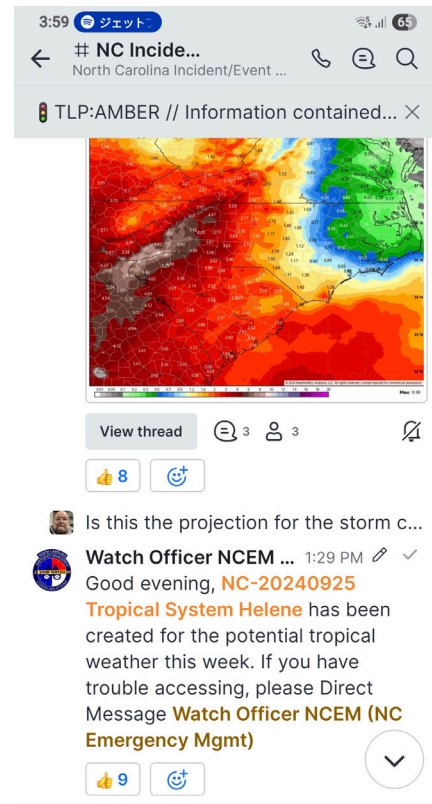
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