A satellite view of a large hurricane swirling over the Earth's surface, seen from space. The hurricane's eye is clearly visible in the center. The Earth's curvature and the blue of the oceans are visible in the background. Parts of a satellite or space station are visible in the lower-left corner.

Voices through the Storm

9-1-1 Continuity During Hurricanes

A satellite view of Earth from space, showing a large hurricane over the ocean. The Earth's curvature is visible at the top, and a portion of a satellite or space station is visible on the left side. The hurricane is a large, swirling cloud system with a distinct eye.

Welcome & Session Objectives

- Discuss real-world continuity challenges during hurricanes
- Explore operational lessons learned from recent events
- Examine systems, staffing, rerouting, and alternate technologies
- Engage audience through scenario-driven discussion
- Focus on practical operational realities—not theory



Florida Hurricane Context

- Irma (2017) – widespread infrastructure disruption
- Michael (2018) – catastrophic damage to PSAP regions
- Ian (2022) – residents stranded, 9-1-1 outages reported
- Idalia (2023) – network and continuity challenges
- Helene (2024) – millions without power
- Milton (2024) – tornado outbreaks and infrastructure failures
- Central Florida outage impacted nearly 1 million residents

The Four Pillars of Continuity

- 1. Resiliency of Systems
- 2. Rerouting of Calls
- 3. Staffing Through TERT
- 4. Alternate Technologies

Pillar 1: Resiliency of Systems

- What failed first: power, fiber, or connectivity?
- Managing common-mode failure risks
- Backup systems dependent on shared infrastructure
- Satellite and radio as operational tools
- Evaluating true system redundancy

What is the most overestimated system?

Pillar 2: Rerouting of Calls

- Operational reality when calls stop reaching a PSAP
- Testing overflow routing under real load
- Governance and staffing coordination challenges
- Managing partial outages
- Role of Text-to-911 and RapidSOS during disruptions

Is your reroute plan operational or documented?

Pillar 3: Staffing Through TERT


- **When to activate TERT resources**
- **Deployment logistics and local integration**
- **Remote and virtual TERT concepts**
- **Staffing collapse thresholds**
- **Operational assumptions challenged during storms**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UV8Vav5v_To

Pillar 4: Alternate Technologies

- Technology that worked in the field
- Satellite texting and direct-to-device communications
- NG911: resilience or added complexity?
- Temporary technology becoming permanent
- Florida examples: Lee, Collier, and Martin Counties

What technology disappointed you most?

A satellite view of Earth from space, showing a large hurricane with a distinct eye and spiral cloud bands. Several satellite panels are visible in the foreground, extending from the left side of the frame. The Earth's surface is a mix of blue oceans and white clouds, with the horizon line visible at the top.

Interactive Scenario Exercise

- Category 4 hurricane makes landfall
- 2 PSAPs offline
- Fiber cut impacts regional connectivity
- 40% staffing loss
- Call volume triples

What are your first actions?

A satellite view of Earth from space, showing a large hurricane with a distinct eye and spiral cloud bands. The Earth's blue oceans and white clouds are visible. In the upper left and lower left corners, parts of a satellite or space station structure are visible, including solar panels and structural beams.

Scenario Phase 1: First Hour

- What is your FIRST operational action?
- Stabilize systems, staffing, or communications?
- Who assumes incident command?
- How are public communications handled?
- Compare audience responses to real-world outcomes

A satellite view of Earth from space, showing a large hurricane with a distinct eye and spiral cloud bands over the ocean. The Earth's curvature and blue atmosphere are visible at the top. Two satellite panels with solar arrays are visible on the left side of the frame.

Scenario Phase 2: Cascading Failures

- Backup PSAP becomes overwhelmed
- Cellular networks degrade
- Power restoration delayed 48+ hours
- What fails next?
- Where does command and control shift?

A satellite view of a large hurricane swirling over the Earth's surface, seen from space. The hurricane's eye and spiral bands are clearly visible. On the left side of the frame, parts of a satellite or space station are visible, including solar panels and structural elements. The text "Thank You!" is centered over the hurricane.

Thank You!