



The Michigan Mortuary Response Team (MI-MORT) and the Disaster Portable Morgue Unit (DPMU) were established to provide the State of Michigan with a mass fatality resource that can be readily deployed to any location within the State in response to an incident in which the number of fatalities has exceeded local or regional resources. MI-MORT has been in existence since 2007 and is a volunteer based collaborative effort between the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), Michigan Funeral Directors Association, Michigan Dental Association Forensic Dental Team, and the Disaster Assistance Recovery Team (DART).

MI-MORT is a specialized volunteer team consisting of various professions including: forensic pathologists; forensic dentists; forensic anthropologists; funeral directors; radiologic technologists; and many others. This team works to support the local Medical Examiner and ultimately the Local, Regional and State response by providing technical assistance and personnel to recover, identify and process deceased victims in a dignified manner from a disaster resulting in mass fatalities.

The DPMU contains equipment and supplies necessary to initiate operations for a fully functional morgue or augment an existing morgue. All materials are segregated into kits, inventoried and stored by section of use, within trailers according to a master load plan for truck transport. The DPMU is designed to be erected inside of a functional, not currently occupied, facility and has its own DPMU team. This team of volunteers is responsible for assembly/disassembly of the infrastructure and inventory management of equipment and supplies.

MDHHS and MI-MORT have established a new commitment to providing more frequent training and exercise opportunities. The Spring 2015 MI-MORT Training and Full Scale Exercise was held April 13-16, 2015, at the Ingham County Fairgrounds in Mason, Michigan. This exercise was designed to train MI-MORT members through a tornado based exercise scenario. Trainings and exercises of this magnitude reinforce continual efforts to build an efficient and effective resource. Components exercise included: Communications; Volunteer Activation; Disaster Assistance Recovery Team of Michigan (DART); Victim Information Collection (VIC); Morgue Identification Center (MIC); DPMU (Team and Asset); Asset Management; and Demobilization.

Being a volunteer on a team such as MI-MORT requires tremendous effort, dedication, trust, input, and feedback. It is that dedication that made the exercise educational, productive, and fun. On the days the most activities of the exercise occurred (April 14-15, 2015), there were 169 total exercise participants; of which 138 were volunteers willing to contribute their own time to enhance MI-MORT. MDHHS and the State of Michigan are so fortunate to have such committed MI-MORT members; as the resource they provide would not be possible without these dedicated volunteers.

For more information about MI-MORT, please visit www.mimort.org.