



American Red Cross Case Study

iDirect provides critical communications support to the American Red Cross in the Gulf region

The Customer Challenge

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, the American Red Cross's ability to coordinate relief and serve thousands of displaced people, and even entire communities, was critical to its emergency response efforts.

In order to connect teams of workers at emergency shelters throughout Louisiana, the Red Cross required a communications system that could be deployed quickly while bypassing the existing terrestrial infrastructure, which had been either heavily damaged or completely destroyed by the hurricane and subsequent levee breach. Additionally, the network needed to be able to do all of the following:

- Easily scale to meet growing needs during the relief effort
- Quickly extend its reach to any geographical location
- Offer user-friendly configuration, management, and maintenance
- Provide a small footprint for easy transport

Beyond its most immediate needs, the Red Cross wanted a robust and flexible communications network that could support voice, data, and video applications in any type of environment for all of its disaster relief services going forward.

"iDirect's quick response allowed us to immediately begin serving families in need across the Gulf region and its communications services continue to be a key component of our success today."

David Craig
American Red Cross



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The iDirect Solution

Within 36 hours, iDirect provided the Red Cross with a fully operational satellite-based broadband access solution, which was instrumental in facilitating communications and service delivery to 30 Red Cross shelters across Louisiana.

Providing end-to-end IP services over satellite, the iDirect system operates independently of the existing terrestrial infrastructure and can be deployed quickly to any geographical location under any conditions. Additionally, it can be easily configured to support any mix of voice, data, and video services, as well as the full complement of IP-based applications.

The solution includes a single iNFINITI hub chassis installed at the Red Cross's Falls Church, VA, teleport hub and 40 3100 satellite routers deployed at needed locations in the region.

From its teleport hub in Virginia, the Red Cross is able to configure, monitor, and control all remote access sites, and even customize services to meet individual site requirements.

At the remote locations, satellite routers provide all the hardware and software needed to support mission critical broadband applications. Each compact terminal provides a satellite modem, IP router, TCP optimization over satellite, AES encryption and QoS/prioritization. This user-friendly and reliable design allows Red Cross volunteers with little or no technical expertise to easily set up and activate the system in the field.

Following the initial response effort, iDirect shipped an additional 40 3100 satellite routers to expand the Red Cross's reach into other affected areas in Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida.

Solution Overview

iDirect's ability to deploy a satellite-based system that bypasses the existing terrestrial infrastructure while providing the same user experience as traditional networks enables the Red Cross to deliver fast, effective emergency response services anywhere, anytime, and under any conditions.

The system's centralized management combined with portable satellite routers allows response teams to quickly adapt to any emergency situation where systems and services must be transported and configured on the fly. Additionally, because the iDirect system supports a full array of broadband services, the system can be easily configured to meet the unique voice, data, and video requirements of any location.



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