

COORDINATING DISASTER RELIEF

PALANTIR & TEAM RUBICON AFTER HURRICANE SANDY

THE PROBLEM

After any natural disaster, there is a critical period of time between the disaster itself and the arrival of state-supported aid. Hurricane Sandy struck the Eastern Seaboard in October 2012. Team Rubicon, a disaster response organization composed of military veterans, filled this gap by serving as the first national non-profit organization to deploy into affected areas. Using **Palantir Gotham**, Team Rubicon deployed Veteran Emergency Response Teams (VERTs) to provide necessary supplies, clear transportation routes, and coordinate over 10,000 spontaneous volunteers.

OUR SOLUTION

“The Palantir software acts as a force multiplier. The software addresses a common problem in dispatching crews for disaster relief: lack of real-time communication.”
-Ford Sypher, Team Rubicon Regional Director

Palantir engineers embedded onsite at Team Rubicon’s command center, partnering with team leaders to develop an application that enabled volunteers to submit requests for assistance through web-enabled mobile devices. Within days, volunteers on the ground were using iPads and smart phones to file requests for water, medical supplies, and home repairs that were aggregated and analyzed as part of the broader operation. Volunteers also used the devices to capture photos of storm damage that were entered into Palantir as media objects and used to inform response planning.

Back at the command center, analysts used Palantir to maintain situational awareness across all response activities. Coordinators tracked volunteer progress and dispatched additional support as needed. Palantir integrated data sources provided by other organizations, including information on fuel availability, power grids, and available medical clinics. Volunteers on the ground accessed this information in Palantir and relayed the information to affected individuals. Using Palantir’s Map application, dispatchers could visualize where volunteers were located in relation to damaged houses and redirect volunteer groups to areas of highest demand and need.

IMPACT & RESULTS

In a **single day**, our engineers developed a plug-in for volunteers to **collect requests for assistance in real time** using phones and iPads.

Using Palantir, analysts at the command center monitored efforts and **dispatched volunteers to areas of greatest need**.

Team Rubicon used Palantir in the field to **coordinate more than 10,000 spontaneous volunteers** for relief efforts.