

(Continued from "Republic's Staff", other side...)

Geiger observed, "All of our key managers were in constant communication throughout the storm. The entire staff had little sleep while they prepared and monitored the airport and ensured that our emergency responders had the help they

needed to get their jobs done. This was an outstanding effort by our Republic 'family' and words of commendation cannot express the appreciation owed these individuals."

Below: Planes are secured as the winds increase.



Massive Cleanup, Major Coordination

It is expected that FEMA representatives will remain at Republic Airport for weeks to come as they assist in the massive cleanup required to get Long Island back on its feet. They will be using the airport's main terminal ramp, building and parking areas to stage material. As it becomes apparent just how widespread the damage is, supplies are continuing to be forwarded to Long Island and then distributed to appropriate locations throughout New York to meet the need.

A point of pride is how well Republic Airport weathered the storm. The fixed based operators, specialty service operators, and the American Airpower Museum personnel spent hours clearing their ramps of equipment, signage, fencing and anything else that might become airborne.

Their hangars were packed with aircraft brought inside to protect these valuable assets. In some instances it was simply impossible to walk in a straight line for more than a few feet. Airport official specifically praised Northeastern Aviation and SheltAir Aviation who volunteered their facilities to assist in the recovery effort.

The airfield did not close during the storm. One aviation tenant reported damage to its fencing and one sign was damaged, but the airport was, and remains, 100% open. That ability to keep the runways clear allowed Governor Andrew Cuomo to use the state's aircraft to travel to parts of our storm ravaged state to personally inspect the extent of the damage.

A Return to Normal, But a Permanent Reminder...

Many of the aircraft that repositioned for the storm have returned, and there is a steady reduction in emergency staffing as more urgent demands for help in upstate New York take priority. Further, there were more than twenty U.S. Forest Service personnel who have returned to California.

The dozens of ambulances that were marshalling at Republic have also been

assigned to a new base. Yet the role of Republic Airport as a key coordinating center remains very much at the center of Long Island's future hurricane recovery efforts as its ability to function in the face of Irene was demonstrated to every first responder who, during times of severe weather, wants every proven ally at his or her side.

NYSDOT has an overall responsibility to respond to emergencies and Republic Airport remains at the heart of Long Island's response plan.

Right: Coast Guard stages a rescue boat at Republic.



Have you checked out the Web?

To better provide the Internet community with news, information and updates regarding Republic Airport, the airport's website has been significantly improved. Be sure to log on at www.republicairport.net.

REPUBLIC
Long Island's Executive Airport

SPECIAL EDITION:

Republic is owned by NYSDOT.

As the storm gathers, so do emergency responders.



Republic Airport's Strategic Role in Facing Down Hurricane Irene

The strategic value of Republic Airport to a region of 2.7 million Long Islanders was dramatically underscored this summer as the barometer dropped, winds rose and Hurricane Irene arrived to isolate neighborhoods, destroy power grids and threaten lives and property.

In the hours leading up to the storm's passage, emergency response crews from around the country headed for Republic Airport, the designated staging point for supplies, equipment and support vehicles. Republic was chosen as an emergency coordinating facility as a result of the lessons learned after Hurricane Katrina devastated Louisiana. Since then, the airport has received various government funds to improve its ability to support that mission, so it came as no surprise when Irene triggered Republic's designation as a "Transportation Distribution Center" for the New York State Emergency Management Office (SEMO) and the

Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA). Armed with laptops, cell phones, generators, an array of heavy equipment and the experience of managing past emergencies, these professionals were welcomed by their Republic Airport colleagues in the quiet hours leading up to Irene's landfall.

Also headquartered inside the Republic terminal were representatives from Suffolk County Emergency Operations Center whose staff used the complex to marshal ambulances needed to evacuate patients in New York City and Long Island hospitals from low lying flood prone areas.

"I cannot speak highly enough of the seasoned professionalism exhibited by everyone who arrived here to confront Hurricane Irene," stated Republic Airport Director Michael Geiger. "From Ohio and Pennsylvania to Albany's Capital District, these first responders joined forces with their Long Island counterparts to create a seamless and efficient organization capable of deploying needed men and women, material, ambulances and generators wherever the priority was greatest. The years of drills and simulation clearly paid off."

Republic's Staff Supported a Fast Moving Emergency Response

Airport manager Shelley LaRose-Arken also commended Airport staff who provided the crucial support allowing emergency responders to do their job effectively. "Each Republic Airport employee who worked through Irene had home and family at risk but they were here because they knew they had a role to play in protecting the region at a time when it was most vulnerable. We are enormously proud of their work ethic and professional skill at meeting the needs of SEMO and FEMA during a very fluid situation."

LaRose-Arken said the key to ensuring sufficient airport staff was available to support the mission was the airport's decision to double staff Operations and Maintenance personnel along with having key managers on duty during the most critical hours of the hurricane. *(Continued on other side...)*

Shelley LaRose-Arken meets the arriving convoy.

