

# MAJOR INCIDENT REPORT



## ARSAL Clashes

Bekaa, July 23, 2017

Prepared for: Lebanese Red Cross and Movement Partners

Prepared by: Rodney Eid, Mazen Yachoui

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**On Friday the 21st of July 2017**, clashes started between Hizballah and the armed groups in the outskirts of Arsal.

The LRC had prepared a contingency plan in case these clashes ever erupted. The contingency plan outlines the scenario of multiple casualties from different parties and an influx of Syrian Refugees and Lebanese IDPs.

The contingency plan was immediately activated on Friday. As part of the contingency plan, both an LRC Command Center and an EMS temporary station were established in Labweh (the closest safe town to Arsal). The command center includes Incident Commanders from both the EMS and the DMU. Also, and as part of the contingency plan forward command zones were established in Ras Baalbeck for the EMS and in Al Fakiha for the DMU. The DMU forward zone is a filtering and routing zone in which, in case we have any IDP influx, the zone will conduct the medical screening through the Mobile Clinics, assessment and routing to appropriate shelters and distribute quick meals.

The below chart shows the Response Capacity that was on ground since the clashes started:

DATE	VEHICLES	HR	BENEFICIARIES	TRANSPORT	TYPE
21/07/2017	29	108	0	1	CIVILIAN
22/07/2017	26	107	30	1	CIVILIAN(NEGOTIATOR)
23/07/2017	26	109	35	0	
24/07/2017	26	105	0	0	
25/07/2017	27	104	9	2	(Syrian)
26/07/2017	25	104	0	3	Armed Groups
27/07/2017	18	101	0	3	Armed Groups
30/07/2017	27	115	400	11	Swap of Dead Bodies + Installation of Water Tanks for LAF
31/07/2017	24	118	310	4	Food and water distribution to bus drivers. 560 meals were distributed + 4 Dead Bodies
01/08/2017	28	121	310	7	Swap + one civilian
02/08/2017	48	181	5732	7	Transport of wounded+ convoy meal distribution
03/08/2017				1	One Dead Body
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>1273</b>	<b>6826</b>	<b>40</b>	

**\* 40 EMTS out of the HR capacity per day are on alert and standby in their stations every day.**

**On Saturday the 22nd of July 2017**, at 15:10 the ICRC and the Islamic Health Society informed the LRC that a patient needs to be evacuated from Arsal to a nearby hospital due his severe wounds. The patient was one of the “Mediators” that were sent to negotiate with both parties. Their vehicle was targeted and one of them was injured: his leg was amputated. The patient was transported from Wadi Hmayed by the Islamic Health Society to a meeting point with the LRC. The LRC received the patient and he was in a bad condition. Within the first 10 minutes of the mission, the patient went into a heart arrest and was immediately resuscitated and the ambulance was diverted to the

nearest hospital. Unfortunately he passed away and was declared dead at the hospital at 15:45.

At 17:00 hrs, the Head of Arsal Municipality contacted the LRC and requested support for an approximate of 25 families. After coordination with the LAF, access to ARSAL was given and an LRC team headed to Arsal with Hygiene Kits, Food Parcels, Blankets, Water Gallons and food meals. At 18:00 the LRC team headed to Arsal and as soon as they entered to Arsal, they were escorted to the municipality warehouse and the items were delivered.

**On Sunday the 23rd of July 2017**, at 14:15 the LAF contacted us and informed us that around 35 families ( woman and children) are moving from Wadi Hmayed to Arsal. The The LAF requested our escort and support. Teams from the EMS and the DMU headed to Arsal and supported in receiving the families. Water and quick snacks were offered.

**On Tuesday the 25th of July 2017**, at 12:45 the LAF contacted us and informed us that 4 woman and 5 children needed to be escorted from Wadi Hmayed to Arsal. One of the woman was pregnant and needed to be transported. The LRC transported the woman, along with her 2 children, to the MSF clinic inside Arsal.

At: 15:45 PM a call from the LAF contacted us to transport a syrian civilian with a bullet wound. A team from the LRC transported the patient from Arsal to a hospital in West Bekaa.

**On Wednesday the 26th of July 2017**, at 15:00 the LAF contacted us to evacuate and transport 3 persons from the armed groups who were injured in Wadi Hmayed. 4

teams from the LRC were dispatched to Wadi Hmayed. The LRC Transported the wounded to a nearby hospital.

**On Thursday the 27th of July 2017**, at 22:00 the LAF contacted us to evacuate and transport 3 persons from the armed groups who were injured in Wadi Hmayed. 4 teams from the LRC were dispatched to Wadi Hmayed. The LRC Transported the wounded to a nearby hospital.

**On Sunday the 30th of July 2017**, at 09:30 the DGS contacted the LRC and requested 8 ambulances to be prepared to conduct a swap between Al Nosra and Hizbollah. The LRC was chosen to conduct the swap due to the credibility it holds amongst all parties.

The swap was phased out and the LRC was assigned to enter to Al Nosra Group Area in Wadi Hmayed. The LRC team swapped 2 civilians with 2 dead bodies in Al Nosra Area. In the second phase, the LRC received the 9 Dead Bodies from Hizbollah and handed them over to Al Nosra in Aarsal. 35 EMTS supported by 15 ambulances successfully completed the swap.

On the same day, the LAF requested water tanks to be installed in one of their bases. An LRC team installed 4 water tanks at the base.

**On Monday the 31st of July 2017**, Buses that will carry the Syrian Refugees from Lebanon to Syria were arriving to their rendezvous point in Aarsal. The LRC distributed meals to the drivers. 310 drivers received 560 meals and water bottles.

**On Tuesday the 1st August**, Bus drivers who had arrived to the rendezvous point in Aarsal were getting frustrated as some of them had been waiting for 2 days with very

strict security measures applied by the LAF. Due to this, the LRC managed to coordinate with the LAF to supply the drivers with their needs.

The drivers had requested water for showering, toilets and blankets as some of them were not briefed on what they were here to do and hadn't planned for a long stay. We managed to get the approval from the army for their requests and the LRC moved forward with providing 3 meals, tea, 160 Blankets and 2 water tanks with 2000 Liters of Drinkable water.

At 23:00 hrs, the DGS called the LRC and requested 4 ambulances to be dispatched to the joint operations station. 4 ambulances and 2 admin cars were dispatched. At 12:00 the LRC was briefed about a swap that needs to be executed by the LRC. The LRC was informed to swap detainees between Al Nosra Group and Hizbollah. The LRC along with the DGS and LAF headed to the Wadi Hmayed Checkpoint to start with the swap process.

The DGS handed over the LRC the 3 Al Nosra Detainees at 12:30. At around 12:45 an LRC ambulance and an admin car were giving the green light to enter to Al Nosra controlled area. The team moved around 1.7 kilometers into the area. Al Nosra Group were waiting for the LRC team to hand them over the 3 Hizbollah Detainees. As soon as the LRC received the 3 detainees from Hizbollah, the second team that had the Al Nosra Detainees was asked to move in. The mission was to move both cars together so that the swap occurs simultaneously.

The swap was successfully completed and the LRC transferred the Hizbollah detainees to the Army Base in Labweh.

**On Wednesday the 2nd of August** , The DGS informed the LRC at 3:00 in the morning that the final phase ( departure of armed groups and civilians) will occur as of 5:00 in the morning.

**The scope of work was :**

1. Organize the queue of un-armed civilians and load them to the buses.
2. Tag the buses with Numbers
3. Distribute food and water to every bus
4. Transport all wounded fighters
5. Escort the convoy.

As the last minute, the DGS informed the LRC that the planned had changed and that the buses were not to be segmented ( Civilians alone, Armed Groups in another set of buses) anymore. We informed the DGS that we cannot take part in loading the buses due to mixing civilians with armed groups.

The LRC teams headed to Wadi Hmayed checkpoint ( the area where all buses were queueing) and deployed:

1. A mobile command unit
2. Bus tagging and meal distribution station
3. Emergency Response Teams

The LRC teams tagged the buses with sequential numbers and loaded 50 meals and 60 bottles to each bus.

After the bus loading process the LRC teams received the injured fighters.

The LRC convoy escorted the buses from Wadi Hmayed to the Flita (at the Syrian Border -35 kilometers - 6.5 hours) where they handed over the convoy and the injured people to the Syrian Arab Red Crescent.

## **MEDIA**

Local and international media were closely following the clashes and the LRC's movement. The media also reported on the evacuation of the middleman and the distribution that occurred