Tropical Storm Allison hits Texas causing record flooding

On June 4, 2001, Tropical Storm Allison struck the upper Texas coast wreaking havoc across the state. The storm dropped heavy rainfall along its path, peaking at over 40 inches of rain in Texas across a span of days. This lead to historical flooding in Harris County, causing 30,000 people to become homeless after flooding 70,000 houses and destroying 2,744 homes. The total cost of damage throughout the state was estimated at $1.76 billion.

TX-TF1 was activated by GDEM on Saturday, June 9, at 4:00 a.m. to assist with search and rescue operations. Upon arrival in Houston, the Water Rescue Strike Team, composed of 13 Water Rescue Squads, immediately began responding to some 700 pending water rescue calls made to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) or the Houston Fire Department.

Shortly after arriving in Houston, TX-TF1 was assigned to an apartment complex with hundreds of people stranded on the roof of the building surrounded by fast rising water. TX-TF1 coordinated the response efforts with Texas Army National Guard and responded with Blackhawk and Chinook helicopters to assist those people in distress.

Overall, TX-TF1 was successful in assisting during the historic and record break floods in Harris County. The team demobilized after 36 hours of continual operations rescuing a total of 1,100 people. Tropical Storm Allison was the impetus for the current day TX-TF1 flood/swiftwater and HSART programs.