



# National Response Framework

January 2008



Homeland Security

This *National Response Framework (NRF)* is a guide to how the Nation conducts all-hazards response. It is built upon scalable, flexible, and adaptable coordinating structures to align key roles and responsibilities across the Nation, linking all levels of government, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector. It is intended to capture specific authorities and best practices for managing incidents that range from the serious but purely local, to large-scale terrorist attacks or catastrophic natural disasters.

This core document, along with the Emergency Support Function Annexes and Support Annexes (available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>), supersedes the corresponding sections of the *National Response Plan* (2004, with 2006 revisions). The Incident Annexes remain in effect until superseded at a later date. The President has approved this *National Response Framework*.

Washington, DC  
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# INTRODUCTION

## OVERVIEW

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**This *National Response Framework (NRF)* [or *Framework*] is a guide to how the Nation conducts all-hazards response.** It is built upon *scalable, flexible, and adaptable coordinating structures* to align key roles and responsibilities *across the Nation*. It describes specific authorities and best practices for managing incidents that range from the serious but purely local, to large-scale terrorist attacks or catastrophic natural disasters.

This document explains the common discipline and structures that have been exercised and matured at the local, tribal, State, and national levels over time. It describes key lessons learned from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, focusing particularly on how the Federal Government is organized to support communities and States in catastrophic incidents. Most importantly, it builds upon the *National Incident Management System (NIMS)*, which provides a consistent template for managing incidents.

**The term “response” as used in this *Framework* includes immediate actions to save lives, protect property and the environment, and meet basic human needs.** Response also includes the execution of emergency plans and actions to support short-term recovery. The *Framework* is always in effect, and elements can be implemented as needed on a flexible, scalable basis to improve response.

## INTENDED AUDIENCE

**The *Framework* is written especially for government executives, private-sector and nongovernmental organization (NGO) leaders, and emergency management practitioners.** First, it is addressed to senior elected and appointed leaders, such as Federal department or agency heads, State Governors, mayors, tribal leaders, and city or county officials – those who have a responsibility to provide for effective response. For the Nation to be prepared for any and all hazards, its leaders must have a baseline familiarity with the concepts and mechanics of the *Framework*.

At the same time, the *Framework* informs emergency management practitioners, explaining the operating structures and tools used routinely by first responders and emergency managers at all levels of government. For these readers, the *Framework* is augmented with online access to supporting documents, further training, and an evolving resource for exchanging lessons learned.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> To support users of the *Framework*, the Department of Homeland Security has created an online **NRF Resource Center**, available at <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>. This online resource will routinely grow and evolve in support of the *Framework* and those who work with it. The initial postings contain multiple supporting documents, operational plans, standard forms, and other tools that are commonly used by the incident management community. The site will further explain technical aspects of the *Framework*, and will routinely post supporting documents as they are newly generated or improved.

## INTRODUCTION

**One of the challenges to effective response is the relatively high turnover and short tenure among elected and appointed officials responsible for response at all levels.** Effective response hinges upon well-trained leaders and responders who have invested in response preparedness, developed engaged partnerships, and are able to achieve shared objectives. The players' bench is constantly changing, but a concise, common playbook is needed by all.

This *Framework* is intended to supply that essential playbook. It is rooted in extensive consultation among practitioners and policymakers at all levels. Operational planning for specific types of incidents has accelerated and improved nationwide since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (or 9/11). Such plans will continue to evolve in alignment with the *Framework*.

## EVOLUTION OF THE *FRAMEWORK*

**This document is an outgrowth of previous iterations of Federal planning documents.** A brief discussion of its history underscores important elements of the *Framework* and highlights improvements to the previous *National Response Plan (NRP)*. This *Framework* was preceded 15 years earlier by a *Federal Response Plan (1992)* that focused largely on Federal roles and responsibilities.

Following the 9/11 attacks, more urgent efforts were made to understand and implement common incident management and response principles and to develop common planning frameworks. The 2004 *NRP* was an early outgrowth of those discussions, replacing the *Federal Response Plan*. It was published one year after creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The *NRP* broke new ground in integrating all levels of government in a common incident management framework. It incorporated incident coordination roles for Federal agencies<sup>2</sup> as defined by several new laws and Presidential directives. Nine months after Katrina's landfall, a notice of change to the *NRP* was released, incorporating preliminary lessons learned from the 2005 hurricane season.

**Stakeholders suggested changes to the *NRP* – both structural and substantive.** Stakeholders have advised that both the initial *NRP* and its 2006 iteration were bureaucratic and internally repetitive.

Users also suggested the *NRP* was still insufficiently *national* in its focus, which is to say that it should speak more clearly to the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in response. Moreover, it was evident that the *NRP* and its supporting documents did not constitute a true operational *plan* in the sense understood by emergency managers. Its content was inconsistent with the promise of its title.

In the last several years, operational planning on a national basis for specific types of incidents has matured. Both public and private sectors are making significant homeland security investments to strengthen the Nation's response capability.

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<sup>2</sup> Note that within this document, use of the term "agency" when referring to Federal entities is inclusive of executive agencies, departments, and Government corporations.

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**By adopting the term “framework” within the title, this document is now more accurately aligned with its intended purpose.** Effective response to an incident is a shared responsibility of governments at all levels, the private sector and NGOs, and individual citizens. This *Framework* commits the Federal Government, in partnership with local, tribal, and State governments and the private sector, to complete both strategic and operational plans for the incident scenarios specified in the *National Preparedness Guidelines*.<sup>3</sup> These plans will ultimately improve significantly the Incident Annexes to this *Framework*, which have been carried forward from the *NRP*.

## *FRAMEWORK UNPACKED*

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The *Framework* presents the key response principles, participants, roles, and structures that guide the Nation’s response operations. The remainder of the *Framework* is organized as follows:

- **Chapter I – Roles and Responsibilities.** This chapter sharpens the focus on **who** is involved with emergency management activities at the local, tribal, State, and Federal levels and with the private sector and NGOs.
- **Chapter II – Response Actions.** This chapter describes **what** we as a Nation collectively do to respond to incidents.
- **Chapter III – Response Organization.** This chapter explains **how** we as a Nation are organized to implement response actions.
- **Chapter IV – Planning: A Critical Element of Effective Response.** This chapter emphasizes the importance of planning and summarizes the elements of national planning structures.
- **Chapter V – Additional Resources.** This final chapter summarizes the content and plan for the online **NRF Resource Center**, a new, actively managed DHS/Federal Emergency Management Agency Web site that will deliver state-of-the-art support for the *Framework* with additional support tools shaped by and addressed to the response community.

## HOW THE FRAMEWORK IS ORGANIZED

**The *National Response Framework* is comprised of the core document, the Emergency Support Function (ESF), Support, and Incident Annexes, and the Partner Guides.** The core document describes the doctrine that guides our national response, roles and responsibilities, response actions, response organizations, and planning requirements to achieve an effective national response to any incident that occurs. The core document of the *National Response Framework* is effective 60 days after publication. The annexes and Partner Guides will be updated periodically and effective 60 days after publication.

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<sup>3</sup> The set of scenarios, while not exhaustive, is representative of a broad range of terrorist attacks and natural disasters that would stretch the Nation’s prevention and response capabilities. Collectively, they yield core prevention and response requirements that can help direct comprehensive planning efforts.

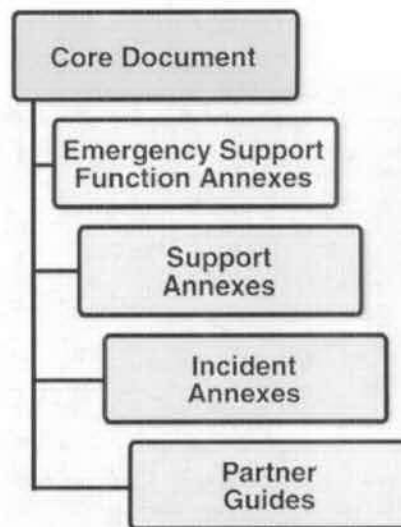


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The following documents provide more detailed information to assist practitioners in implementing the *Framework*:

- **Emergency Support Function Annexes** group Federal resources and capabilities into functional areas that are most frequently needed in a national response (e.g., Transportation, Firefighting, Mass Care).
- **Support Annexes** describe essential supporting aspects that are common to all incidents (e.g., Financial Management, Volunteer and Donations Management, Private-Sector Coordination).
- **Incident Annexes** address the unique aspects of how we respond to seven broad incident categories (e.g., Biological, Nuclear/Radiological, Cyber, Mass Evacuation).
- **Partner Guides** provide ready references describing key roles and actions for local, tribal, State, Federal, and private-sector response partners.

**Figure 1. Organization of the Framework**



The **National Incident Management System (NIMS)** is a companion document that provides standard command and management structures that apply to response activities. This system provides a consistent, nationwide template to enable Federal, State, tribal, and local governments, the private sector, and NGOs to work together to prepare for, prevent, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity. This consistency provides the foundation for utilization of the *NIMS* for all incidents, ranging from daily occurrences to incidents requiring a coordinated Federal response.

These documents are available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

## RESPONSE: THE WHO

**An effective, unified national response requires layered, mutually supporting capabilities.** The *Framework* systematically incorporates public-sector agencies, the private sector, and NGOs. It also emphasizes the importance of personal preparedness by individuals and households.

Communities, tribes, States, the Federal Government, NGOs, and the private sector should each understand their respective roles and responsibilities, and complement each other in achieving shared goals. Each governmental level plays a prominent role in developing capabilities needed to respond to incidents. This includes developing plans, conducting assessments and exercises, providing and directing resources and capabilities, and gathering lessons learned. These activities require that involved organizations understand their roles and responsibilities, and how they fit within and are supported by the *Framework*.

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**It is important that each level of government adapt and apply the general roles outlined in the *Framework*.** To do this, organizations should define key leadership and staff functions, adopt capabilities-based planning as the method to build response capabilities, and impose the discipline needed to plan and operate effectively. Partner Guides that summarize core *Framework* concepts and are tailored specifically to leaders at different levels and types of organizations are provided through the online **NRF Resource Center**.

Even when a community is overwhelmed by an incident, there is still a core, sovereign responsibility to be exercised at this local level, with unique response obligations to coordinate with State, Federal, and private-sector support teams. Each organization or level of government therefore has an imperative to fund and execute its own core emergency management responsibilities.

Below is a brief summary of emergency management roles at the local, tribal, State, and Federal levels, as well as the roles of private-sector organizations. Emergency management is the coordination and integration of all activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, or mitigate against threatened or actual natural disasters, acts of terrorism, or other manmade disasters.

**Local Governments. Resilient communities begin with prepared individuals and depend on the leadership and engagement of local government, NGOs, and the private sector.** Individuals, families, and caregivers to those with special needs should enhance their awareness of risk and threats, develop household emergency plans that include care for pets and service animals, and prepare emergency supply kits.<sup>4</sup> Individuals can also volunteer in their communities.

Local police, fire, emergency medical services, public health and medical providers, emergency management, public works, environmental response professionals, and others in the community are often the first to detect a threat or hazard, or respond to an incident. They also are often the last to leave an incident site or otherwise to cope with the effects of an incident. The local senior elected or appointed official (the mayor, city manager, or county manager) is responsible for ensuring the public safety and welfare of residents. In today's world, senior officials and their emergency managers build the foundation for an effective response. They organize and integrate their capabilities and resources with neighboring jurisdictions, the State, NGOs, and the private sector. Increasingly, businesses are vital partners within communities wherever retail locations, service sites, manufacturing facilities, or management offices are located. NGOs and not-for-profit organizations also play a key role in strengthening communities' response efforts through their knowledge of hard-to-reach populations, outreach, and services.

**States, Territories, and Tribal Governments. States, territories, and tribal governments have responsibility for the public health and welfare of the people in their jurisdiction.** State and local governments are closest to those impacted by incidents, and have always had the lead in response and recovery. During response, States play a key role coordinating resources and capabilities throughout the State and obtaining resources and capabilities from other States. States are sovereign entities, and the Governor has responsibility for public safety and welfare. While U.S. territories,

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<sup>4</sup> More information on preparing a household emergency plan is available at <http://www.ready.gov>.

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possessions, freely associated states,<sup>5</sup> and tribal governments also have sovereign rights, there are unique factors involved in working with these entities. Stafford Act assistance is available to States and to Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, which are included in the definition of "State" in the Stafford Act.<sup>6</sup>

States have significant resources of their own, including State emergency management and homeland security agencies, State police, health agencies, transportation agencies, incident management teams, specialized teams, and the National Guard. The role of the State government in response is to supplement local efforts before, during, and after incidents. **If a State anticipates that its resources may be exceeded, the Governor can request assistance from the Federal Government and/or from other States through mutual aid and assistance agreements such as the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC).**<sup>7</sup>

**The Federal Government. The Federal Government maintains a wide array of capabilities and resources that can be made available upon request of the Governor.** When an incident occurs that exceeds or is anticipated to exceed State, tribal, or local resources, the Federal Government may provide resources and capabilities to support the State response. For incidents involving primary Federal jurisdiction or authorities (e.g., on a military base or a Federal facility or lands), Federal departments or agencies may be the first responders and first line of defense, coordinating activities with State, territorial, tribal, and local partners. The Federal Government also maintains working relationships with the private sector and NGOs.

Pursuant to the Homeland Security Act of 2002 and Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 5, the Secretary of Homeland Security is the principal Federal official for domestic incident management. Incident management refers to how incidents are managed across all homeland security activities, including prevention, protection, and response and recovery. Other Federal departments and agencies have key responsibilities to support national response activities and carry out those responsibilities within the overarching coordinating mechanisms of this *Framework*. DHS coordinates with other agencies to surge Federal support at the headquarters, regional, and field levels.

**The Private Sector and NGOs.** The private sector and NGOs contribute to response efforts through engaged partnerships with each level of government. Private-sector organizations and NGOs are encouraged to develop contingency plans and to work with State and local planners to ensure that their plans are consistent with pertinent plans, the *NIMS*, and this *Framework*.

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<sup>5</sup> The *Framework* is applicable to U.S. possessions and insular areas, as well as the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. The U.S. Government does not provide disaster assistance to the Republic of Palau, in accordance with the Compact of Free Association. Insular areas include Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

<sup>6</sup> Often throughout this *Framework*, discussion of authorities and roles of States is also intended to incorporate those of U.S. territories and possessions and tribal nations.

<sup>7</sup> A reference paper on EMAC is available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

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**Private-sector organizations play an essential role in protecting critical infrastructure systems and implementing plans for the rapid restoration of normal commercial activities and critical infrastructure operations in the event of disruption.**<sup>8</sup> The protection of critical infrastructure and the ability to rapidly restore normal commercial activities can mitigate the impact of an incident, improve the quality of life of individuals, and accelerate the pace of recovery for communities and the Nation. There are not-for-profit owners/operators of critical infrastructure and key resources (CIKR) facilities, notably in healthcare and power generation.

**NGOs also serve a vital role at the local, State, and national levels by performing essential service missions in times of need.** They provide sheltering, emergency food supplies, and other vital support services. NGOs bolster and support government efforts at all levels.<sup>9</sup>

## RESPONSE: THE WHAT AND THE HOW

**The *National Response Framework* is always in effect, and elements can be implemented at any level at any time.** The *Framework* is capabilities based, which is to say that local governments, tribes, States, and the Federal Government all develop functional capabilities and identify resources that may be required based on hazard identification and risk assessment, threats, and other potential incidents such as those represented by the National Planning Scenarios.

**The *Framework* describes what we do and how we respond.** In short, the *National Response Framework* explains how, at all levels, the Nation effectively manages all-hazards response consistent with the *National Strategy for Homeland Security*. The remainder of this Introduction explains the *Framework's* scope, the response doctrine that animates it, and the preparedness strategy of which it is a part. It correlates with an outline of the overall document.

## SCOPE

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**The *Framework* provides structures for implementing nationwide response policy and operational coordination for all types of domestic incidents.** It can be partially or fully implemented in the context of a threat, in anticipation of a significant event, or in response to an incident. Selective implementation allows for a scaled response, delivery of the resources needed, and an appropriate level of coordination.

In this document, incidents include actual or potential emergencies or all-hazards events that range from accidents and natural disasters to actual or potential terrorist attacks. They include events wholly contained within a single jurisdiction and others that are catastrophic in nature and national in their scope or consequences.

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<sup>8</sup> Additional information on protection of critical infrastructure and key resources (CIKR) can be found in the CIKR Support Annex available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

<sup>9</sup> The American Red Cross is a federally chartered instrumentality of the U.S. Government, but it is not a Federal agency under this *Framework*.

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**It is not always obvious at the outset whether a seemingly minor event might be the initial phase of a larger, rapidly growing threat.** The *Framework* incorporates standardized organizational structures that promote on-scene initiative, innovation, and sharing of essential resources drawn from all levels of government, NGOs, and the private sector. Response must be quickly scalable, flexible, and adaptable.

The *Framework* is also intended to accelerate the assessment and response to incidents that may require Federal assistance. In practice, many incidents require virtually reflexive activation of interagency coordination protocols to forestall the incident from becoming worse or to surge more aggressively to contain it. A Federal department or agency acting on independent authority may be the initial and the primary Federal responder, but incidents that require more systematic Federal response efforts are now actively coordinated through the appropriate *Framework* mechanisms described in this document and in its supporting annexes. This initial coordination of Federal incident assessment and response efforts is intended to occur seamlessly, without the need for any formal trigger mechanism.

**This *Framework*, therefore, eliminates the Incident of National Significance declaration.** No such declaration is required by the *Framework* and none will be made. The authorities of the Secretary of Homeland Security to coordinate large-scale national responses are unaltered by this change. Elimination of this declaration will, however, support a more nimble, scalable, and coordinated response by the entire national emergency management community.

## RESPONSE DOCTRINE

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**Response doctrine defines basic roles, responsibilities, and operational concepts for response across all levels of government and with NGOs and the private sector.** The overarching objective of response activities centers upon saving lives and protecting property and the environment. Five key principles of operations define response actions in support of the Nation's response mission. Taken together, these five principles of operation constitute **national response doctrine**.

### Response Doctrine: Five Key Principles

1. Engaged partnership
2. Tiered response
3. Scalable, flexible, and adaptable operational capabilities
4. Unity of effort through unified command
5. Readiness to act

**Response doctrine is rooted in America's Federal system and the Constitution's division of responsibilities between Federal and State governments.** Because this doctrine reflects the history of emergency management and the distilled wisdom of responders and leaders at all levels, it gives elemental form to the *Framework*.

This doctrine evolves in response to changes in the political and strategic landscape, lessons learned from operations, and the introduction of new technologies. Doctrine influences the way in which policy and plans are developed, forces are organized and

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trained, and equipment is procured. It promotes unity of purpose, guides professional judgment, and enables responders to best fulfill their responsibilities."<sup>10</sup>

**Response doctrine evolves slowly.** Response strategy and the *Framework* merit periodic review and revision, while operational plans supporting the *Framework* must be tested and improved through a process of continuous innovation. The last is especially true regarding operational plans to counter the threat of a terrorist attack.

**Response doctrine is comprised of five key principles:** (1) engaged partnership, (2) tiered response, (3) scalable, flexible, and adaptable operational capabilities, (4) unity of effort through unified command, and (5) readiness to act. An introductory word about each follows.

## ENGAGED PARTNERSHIP

Leaders at all levels must communicate and actively support engaged partnerships by developing shared goals and aligning capabilities so that no one is overwhelmed in times of crisis. Layered, mutually supporting capabilities at Federal, State, tribal, and local levels allow for planning together in times of calm and responding together effectively in times of need. Engaged partnership includes ongoing communication of incident activity among all partners to the *Framework*, and shared situational awareness for a more rapid response. In particular, the potential for terrorist incidents requires a *heightened state of readiness* and nimble, practiced capabilities baked into the heart of our preparedness and response planning.

**Engaged partnerships are essential to preparedness.** Effective response activities begin with a host of preparedness activities conducted well in advance of an incident. Preparedness involves a combination of planning, resources, training, exercising, and organizing to build, sustain, and improve operational capabilities. Preparedness is the process of identifying the personnel, training, and equipment needed for a wide range of potential incidents, and developing jurisdiction-specific plans for delivering capabilities when needed for an incident.

Preparedness activities should be coordinated among all involved agencies within the jurisdiction, as well as across jurisdictions. Integrated planning, described later in this *Framework*, will assist in identifying gaps in capability and developing strategies to fill those gaps.

Nationwide preparedness is described in the *National Preparedness Guidelines* and the *National Exercise Program*.<sup>11</sup> These documents lay out 15 National Planning Scenarios that form the basis of the newly coordinated national exercise schedule and priorities, and identify 37 core capabilities that are needed to support response across the Nation. The *Guidelines* identify core local, tribal, community, and State capabilities that will be supported by the DHS homeland security grant programs.

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<sup>10</sup> *United States Coast Guard: America's Maritime Guardian*, Coast Guard Publication 1 (Washington, DC: January 2002, second printing), p. 3. The term "doctrine" has clear and rich meaning as a guide to action within the military services. See also U.S. Department of Defense's *Joint Operations Planning and Execution System*, an overview of which is available at [http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/other\\_pubs/jopes.pdf](http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/other_pubs/jopes.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> Information on the *National Preparedness Guidelines* can be found at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

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### TIERED RESPONSE

**Incidents must be managed at the lowest possible jurisdictional level and supported by additional capabilities when needed.** It is not necessary that each level be overwhelmed prior to requesting resources from another level.

Incidents begin and end locally, and most are wholly managed at the local level. Many incidents require unified response from local agencies, NGOs, and the private sector, and some require additional support from neighboring jurisdictions or the State. A small number require Federal support. National response protocols recognize this and are structured to provide additional, tiered levels of support when there is a need for more resources or capabilities to support and sustain the response and initial recovery. All levels should be prepared to respond, anticipating resources that may be required.

**A basic premise of the *Framework* is that incidents are generally handled at the lowest jurisdictional level possible.**

### SCALABLE, FLEXIBLE, AND ADAPTABLE OPERATIONAL CAPABILITIES

**As incidents change in size, scope, and complexity, the response must adapt to meet requirements.** The number, type, and sources of resources must be able to expand rapidly to meet needs associated with a given incident. The *Framework's* disciplined and coordinated process can provide for a rapid surge of resources from all levels of government, appropriately scaled to need. Execution must be flexible and adapted to fit each individual incident. For the duration of a response, and as needs grow and change, responders must remain nimble and adaptable. Equally, the overall response should be flexible as it transitions from the response effort to recovery.

This *Framework* is grounded in doctrine that demands a tested inventory of common organizational structures and capabilities that are scalable, flexible, and adaptable for diverse operations. Adoption of the *Framework* across all levels of government and with businesses and NGOs will facilitate interoperability and improve operational coordination.

### UNITY OF EFFORT THROUGH UNIFIED COMMAND

**Effective *unified command* is indispensable to response activities and requires a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each participating organization.** Success requires ***unity of effort***, which respects the chain of command of each participating organization while harnessing seamless coordination across jurisdictions in support of common objectives.

Use of the Incident Command System (ICS) is an important element across multijurisdictional or multiagency incident management activities. It provides a structure to enable agencies with different legal, jurisdictional, and functional responsibilities to coordinate, plan, and interact effectively on scene. As a team effort, unified command allows all agencies with jurisdictional authority and/or functional responsibility for the incident to provide joint support through mutually developed incident objectives and strategies established at the command level. Each participating agency maintains its own authority, responsibility, and accountability. This *Framework* employs the *NIMS*

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standardized structures and tools that enable a unified approach to be effective both on scene and at the emergency operations centers.

The Department of Defense (DOD) is a full partner in the Federal response to domestic incidents, and its response is fully coordinated through the mechanisms of this *Framework*.<sup>12</sup> Concepts of "command" and "unity of command" have distinct legal and cultural meanings for military forces and military operations. For Federal military forces, command runs from the President to the Secretary of Defense to the Commander of the combatant command to the DOD on-scene commander. Military forces will always remain under the operational and administrative control of the military chain of command, and these forces are subject to redirection or recall at any time. The ICS "unified command" concept is distinct from the military chain of command use of this term. And, as such, military forces do not operate under the command of the Incident Commander or under the unified command structure.

The *NIMS*<sup>13</sup> supports response through the following elements of unified command: (1) developing a single set of objectives; (2) using a collective, strategic approach; (3) improving information flow and coordination; (4) creating common understanding of joint priorities and restrictions; (5) ensuring that no agency's legal authorities are compromised or neglected; and (6) optimizing the combined efforts of all agencies under a single plan.

## READINESS TO ACT

**Effective response requires readiness to act balanced with an understanding of risk.** From individuals, households, and communities to local, tribal, State, and Federal governments, national response depends on the instinct and ability to act. A forward-leaning posture is imperative for incidents that have the potential to expand rapidly in size, scope, or complexity, and for no-notice incidents.

**Once response activities have begun, on-scene actions are based on *NIMS* principles.** To save lives and protect property and the environment, decisive action on scene is often required of responders. Although some risk may be unavoidable, first responders can effectively anticipate and manage risk through proper training and planning.

Command, single or unified, is responsible for establishing immediate priorities for the safety of not only the public, but the responders and other emergency workers involved in the response, and for ensuring that adequate health and safety measures are in place. The Incident Commander should ensure that each incident has a designated safety officer who has been trained and equipped to assess the operation, identify hazardous and unsafe situations, and implement effective safety plans.

**Acting swiftly and effectively requires clear, focused communication and the processes to support it.** Without effective communication, a bias toward action will be ineffectual at best, likely perilous. An effective national response relies on disciplined processes, procedures, and systems to communicate timely, accurate, and accessible information on the incident's cause, size, and current situation to the public, responders,

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<sup>12</sup> The Secretary of Defense retains command of DOD military forces providing Defense Support of Civil Authorities. National Guard forces under the command and control of a Governor are not DOD military forces. Nothing in this *Framework* impairs or otherwise affects the authority of the Secretary of Defense over the DOD.

<sup>13</sup> The *National Incident Management System* is available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.



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and others. Well-developed public information, education strategies, and communication plans help to ensure that lifesaving measures, evacuation routes, threat and alert systems, and other public safety information are coordinated and communicated to numerous diverse audiences in a consistent, accessible, and timely manner.

## **PART OF A BROADER STRATEGY**

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The *National Response Framework* is required by, and integrates under, a larger *National Strategy for Homeland Security (Strategy)* that serves to guide, organize, and unify our Nation's homeland security efforts. The *Strategy* reflects our increased understanding of the threats confronting the United States, incorporates lessons learned from exercises and real-world catastrophes, and articulates how we should ensure our long-term success by strengthening the homeland security foundation we have built. It provides a common framework by which our entire Nation should focus its homeland security efforts on achieving the following four goals:

1. Prevent and disrupt terrorist attacks.
2. Protect the American people and our critical infrastructure and key resources.
3. Respond to and recover from incidents that do occur.
4. Continue to strengthen the foundation to ensure our long-term success.

While the first three goals help to organize our national efforts, the last goal entails creating and transforming our homeland security principles, systems, structures, and institutions. This includes applying a comprehensive approach to risk management, building a culture of preparedness, developing a comprehensive Homeland Security Management System, improving incident management, better utilizing science and technology, and leveraging all instruments of national power and influence.

The *Framework* primarily focuses on the third goal: respond to and recover from incidents that do occur. The *Strategy* also provides the context that given the certainty of catastrophes on our soil – no matter how unprecedented or extraordinary – it is our collective duty to provide the best response possible. It states that, when needed, we will bring to bear the Nation's full capabilities and resources to save lives, mitigate suffering, and protect property. The *Strategy* also reminds us that as the Nation responds to an incident, we must also begin to lay the foundation not only for a strong recovery over the short term but also for the rebuilding and revitalization of affected communities and regions over the long term.

The *Strategy* calls for a *National Response Framework* that helps to strengthen the foundation for an effective national response, rapidly assess emerging incidents, take initial actions, expand operations as needed, and commence recovery actions to stabilize the area. It also calls for the *Framework* to be clearly written, easy to understand, and designed to be truly national in scope, meeting the needs of State, local, and tribal governments and the private sector and NGOs, as well as the Federal Government. In addition, the *Strategy* underscores the need to ensure that those communities devastated or severely affected by a catastrophic incident are set on a sustainable path for long-term rebuilding and revitalization. The *Framework* is designed to respond to and support the *Strategy* and is intended to be informed by and tie seamlessly to national, State, tribal, and local preparedness activities and investments.

## INTRODUCTION

The *Strategy* further describes how the other three national goals are supported through other strategies, plans, and ongoing efforts. For example, the national goal to prevent and disrupt terrorist attacks is further supported by the updated *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, released in September 2006, which articulates our Nation's strategy for winning the War on Terror. The sections in both on preventing and disrupting terrorist attacks are complementary and mutually reinforcing. In order to prevent and disrupt terrorist attacks in the United States, we are working to deny terrorists and terrorist-related weapons and materials entry into our country and across all international borders, disrupt their ability to operate within our borders, and prevent the emergence of violent Islamic radicalization in order to deny terrorists future recruits and defeat homegrown extremism. Our *National Strategy to Combat Terrorist Travel*, *National Strategy for Maritime Security*, and *National Strategy for Aviation Security* are helping to guide our efforts in this area.

The national goal to protect the American people and our critical infrastructure and key resources is also supported by existing plans. The *Strategy* sets forth that to protect the lives and livelihoods of the American people, we must undertake measures to deter the threat of terrorism, mitigate the Nation's vulnerability to acts of terror and the full range of manmade and natural catastrophes, and minimize the consequences of an attack or disaster should it occur. Safeguarding the American people also includes the preservation of the Nation's CIKR. Guiding our efforts to protect the Nation's CIKR is the 2006 *National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP)* and its supporting Sector-Specific Plans, which were developed pursuant to HSPD-7, issued on December 17, 2003. The *NIPP* sets forth a comprehensive risk management framework and provides a coordinated approach to CIKR protection roles and responsibilities for Federal, State, local, and private-sector security partners. It sets national priorities, goals, and requirements for the effective distribution of funding and resources that will help ensure that our government, economy, and public services continue to function in the event of a manmade or natural disaster.

The last national goal is to continue to strengthen the foundation to ensure our long-term success. To fulfill these responsibilities over the long term, we will continue to strengthen the principles, systems, structures, and institutions that cut across the homeland security enterprise and support our activities to secure the homeland. Ultimately, this will help ensure the success of our *Strategy* to secure the Nation.

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## CHAPTER I

# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**This chapter provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of key partners at the local, tribal, State, and Federal levels who implement the *Framework*. This includes an important role for the private sector and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). This chapter sharpens the focus on *who is involved* with the *Framework* and what must be done to build and maintain essential response capabilities.**

### LOCAL

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**The responsibility for responding to incidents, both natural and manmade, begins at the local level – with individuals and public officials in the county, city, or town affected by the incident.** Local leaders and emergency managers prepare their communities to manage incidents locally. The *Framework's* response doctrine plays a key role in helping community leaders to coordinate resources within jurisdictions, among adjacent jurisdictions, and with the private sector and NGOs such as the American Red Cross. This section describes the roles and responsibilities of key leadership elements within communities.

**Chief Elected or Appointed Official. A mayor, city manager, or county manager, as a jurisdiction's chief executive officer, is responsible for ensuring the public safety and welfare of the people of that jurisdiction.** Specifically, this official provides strategic guidance and resources during preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. Emergency management, including preparation and training for effective response, is a core obligation of local leaders.

Chief elected or appointed officials must have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for successful emergency management and response. At times, these roles may require providing direction and guidance to constituents during an incident, but their day-to-day activities do not focus on emergency management and response. On an ongoing basis, elected and appointed officials may be called upon to help shape or modify laws, policies, and budgets to aid preparedness efforts and to improve emergency management and response capabilities.

Any incident can have a mix of public health, economic, social, environmental, criminal, and political implications with potentially serious long-term effects. **Significant incidents require a coordinated response across agencies and jurisdictions, political boundaries, sectors of society, organizations, etc. These incidents will require that publicly elected and appointed officials, as well as business owners and community leaders, make difficult decisions for the benefit of the community as a whole.**

## CHAPTER I: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Elected and appointed officials help their communities prepare for, respond to, and recover from potential incidents. Key responsibilities include:

- Establishing strong working relationships with local jurisdictional leaders and core private-sector organizations, voluntary agencies, and community partners. The objective is to get to know, coordinate with, and train with local partners in advance of an incident and to develop mutual aid and/or assistance agreements for support in response to an incident.
- Leading and encouraging local leaders to focus on preparedness by participating in planning, training, and exercises.
- Supporting participation in local mitigation efforts within the jurisdiction and, as appropriate, with the private sector.
- Understanding and implementing laws and regulations that support emergency management and response.
- Ensuring that local emergency plans take into account the needs of:
  - The jurisdiction, including persons, property, and structures.
  - Individuals with special needs, including those with service animals.
  - Individuals with household pets.
- Encouraging residents to participate in volunteer organizations and training courses.

**Local leaders also work closely with their Members of Congress during incidents and on an ongoing basis regarding local preparedness capabilities and needs. Members of Congress play an important, ongoing role in supporting their constituents for effective local response and emergency planning.** Members often help local leaders understand the Federal resources that are available to prepare for incidents. Especially during high-consequence events, many citizens traditionally contact Members for assistance or information on Federal response policies and assistance. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recognizes a special obligation to provide Members representing affected areas with timely information about incidents that involve Federal response.

**Emergency Manager. The local emergency manager has the day-to-day authority and responsibility for overseeing emergency management programs and activities.** He or she works with chief elected and appointed officials to ensure that there are unified objectives with regard to the jurisdiction's emergency plans and activities. This role entails coordinating all aspects of a jurisdiction's capabilities.

The emergency manager coordinates all components of the local emergency management program, to include assessing the availability and readiness of local resources most likely required during an incident and identifying and correcting any shortfalls.

## CHAPTER I: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Other duties of the local emergency manager might include the following:

- Coordinating the planning process and working cooperatively with other local agencies and private-sector organizations.
- Developing mutual aid and assistance agreements.
- Coordinating damage assessments during an incident.
- Advising and informing local officials about emergency management activities during an incident.
- Developing and executing public awareness and education programs.
- Conducting exercises to test plans and systems and obtain lessons learned.
- Involving the private sector and NGOs in planning, training, and exercises.

**Department and Agency Heads.** The local emergency manager is assisted by, and coordinates the efforts of, employees in departments and agencies that perform emergency management functions. Department and agency heads collaborate with the emergency manager during development of local emergency plans and provide key response resources. Participation in the planning process ensures that specific capabilities (e.g., firefighting, law enforcement, emergency medical services, public works, environmental and natural resources agencies) are integrated into a workable plan to safeguard the community.

These department and agency heads and their staffs develop, plan, and train to internal policies and procedures to meet response and recovery needs safely. They should also participate in interagency training and exercises to develop and maintain the necessary capabilities.

**Individuals and Households.** Although not formally a part of emergency management operations, individuals and households play an important role in the overall emergency management strategy. Community members can contribute by:

- **Reducing hazards in and around their homes.** By taking simple actions, such as raising utilities above flood level or taking in unanchored objects during high winds, people can reduce the amount of damage caused by an incident.
- **Preparing an emergency supply kit and household emergency plan.** By developing a household emergency plan and assembling disaster supplies in advance of an event, people can take care of themselves until assistance arrives. This includes supplies for household pets and service animals. See the recommended disaster supplies list at <http://www.ready.gov>.
- **Monitoring emergency communications carefully.** Throughout an emergency, critical information and direction will be released to the public via various media. By carefully following the directions provided, residents can reduce their risk of injury, keep emergency routes open to response personnel, and reduce demands on landline and cellular communication.

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- **Volunteering with an established organization.** Organizations and agencies with a role in response and recovery are always seeking hardworking, dedicated volunteers. By volunteering with an established voluntary agency, individuals and households become part of the emergency management system and ensure that their efforts are directed where they are needed most.
- **Enrolling in emergency response training courses.** Emergency response training, whether basic first aid through the American Red Cross or a more complex course through a local college, will enable residents to take initial response actions required to take care of themselves and their households, thus allowing first responders to focus on higher priority tasks that affect the entire community.

Citizen Corps brings together local leaders from government and civic leaders from NGOs and the private sector to prepare for and respond to incidents. Citizen Corps Councils are typically sponsored by elected or appointed officials and/or emergency managers. These Councils provide leadership and support for programs that educate, train, and engage community volunteers to support emergency management and responders.

## THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND NGOS

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Government agencies are responsible for protecting the lives and property of their citizens and promoting their well-being. However, the government does not, and cannot, work alone. **In many facets of an incident, the government works with private-sector groups as partners in emergency management.**

**Private Sector.** Private sector organizations play a key role before, during, and after an incident. First, they must provide for the welfare and protection of their employees in the workplace. In addition, emergency managers must work seamlessly with businesses that provide water, power, communication networks, transportation, medical care, security, and numerous other services upon which both response and recovery are particularly dependent.

Participation of the private sector varies based on the nature of the organization and the nature of the incident. The five distinct roles that private-sector organizations play are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1. Private-Sector Response Role**

Category	Role in This Category
<b>Impacted Organization or Infrastructure</b>	Private-sector organizations may be impacted by direct or indirect consequences of the incident. These include privately owned critical infrastructure, key resources, and other private-sector entities that are significant to local, regional, and national economic recovery from the incident. Examples of privately owned infrastructure include transportation, telecommunications, private utilities, financial institutions, and hospitals. Critical infrastructure and key resources (CIKR) are grouped into 17 sectors that together provide essential functions and services supporting various aspects of the American government, economy, and society.

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Category	Role in This Category
<b>Regulated and/or Responsible Party</b>	Owners/operators of certain regulated facilities or hazardous operations may be legally responsible for preparing for and preventing incidents from occurring and responding to an incident once it occurs. For example, Federal regulations require owners/operators of nuclear power plants to maintain emergency plans and facilities and to perform assessments, prompt notifications, and training for a response to an incident.
<b>Response Resource</b>	Private-sector entities provide response resources (donated or compensated) during an incident – including specialized teams, essential service providers, equipment, and advanced technologies – through local public-private emergency plans or mutual aid and assistance agreements, or in response to requests from government and nongovernmental-volunteer initiatives.
<b>Partner With State/Local Emergency Organizations</b>	Private-sector entities may serve as partners in local and State emergency preparedness and response organizations and activities.
<b>Components of the Nation's Economy</b>	As the key element of the national economy, private-sector resilience and continuity of operations planning, as well as recovery and restoration from an actual incident, represent essential homeland security activities.

**Many private-sector organizations are responsible for operating and maintaining portions of the Nation's critical infrastructure.** Critical infrastructures include those assets, systems, networks, and functions – physical or virtual – so vital to the United States that their incapacitation or destruction would have a debilitating impact on security, national economic security, public health or safety, or any combination of those matters. Key resources are publicly or privately controlled resources essential to minimal operation of the economy and the government.<sup>14</sup> DHS has developed a comprehensive *National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP)* that is synchronized with this *Framework*.<sup>15</sup> The CIKR Support Annex discusses necessary support by and for CIKR during an incident and mechanisms in place to implement that support.

**During an incident, key private-sector partners should be involved in the local crisis decisionmaking process or at least have a direct link to key local emergency managers.** Communities cannot effectively respond to, or recover from, incidents without strong cooperative relations with the private sector.

Essential private-sector responsibilities include:

- Planning for the protection of employees, infrastructure, and facilities.
- Planning for the protection of information and the continuity of business operations.
- Planning for responding to and recovering from incidents that impact their own infrastructure and facilities.

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<sup>14</sup> *National Infrastructure Protection Plan*, 2006, Glossary of Key Terms, is the source for the definitions of critical infrastructure and key resources. These definitions are derived from the provisions of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 and Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 7.

<sup>15</sup> The goal of the *NIPP* is to build a safer, more secure, and more resilient America by enhancing protection of the Nation's critical infrastructure and key resources (CIKR). See <http://www.dhs.gov/nipp> for additional information. The CIKR Support Annex and Private-Sector Coordination Support Annex provide detailed guidance regarding implementation of the *NIPP*, including roles and responsibilities, concept of operations, and incident-related actions.



## CHAPTER I: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Collaborating with emergency management personnel before an incident occurs to ascertain what assistance may be necessary and how they can help.
- Developing and exercising emergency plans before an incident occurs.
- Where appropriate, establishing mutual aid and assistance agreements to provide specific response capabilities.
- Providing assistance (including volunteers) to support local emergency management and public awareness during response and throughout the recovery process.

**Nongovernmental Organizations. NGOs play enormously important roles before, during, and after an incident.** For example, NGOs provide sheltering, emergency food supplies, counseling services, and other vital support services to support response and promote the recovery of disaster victims. These groups often provide specialized services that help individuals with special needs, including those with disabilities.

A key feature of NGOs is their inherent independence and commitment to specific sets of interests and values. These interests and values drive the groups' operational priorities and shape the resources they provide. Such NGOs bolster and support government efforts at all levels – for response operations and planning. However, NGOs may also need government assistance, and when planning the allocation of local community emergency management resources and structures, some government organizations provide direct assistance to NGOs. NGOs collaborate with responders, governments at all levels, and other agencies and organizations.

Examples of NGO and voluntary organization contributions include:

- Training and managing volunteer resources.
- Identifying shelter locations and needed supplies.
- Providing critical emergency services to those in need, such as cleaning supplies, clothing, food and shelter, or assistance with post-emergency cleanup.
- Identifying those whose needs have not been met and helping coordinate the provision of assistance.

**Some NGOs are officially designated as support elements to national response capabilities.**

- ***The American Red Cross.*** The American Red Cross is a supporting agency to the mass care functions of Emergency Support Function (ESF) #6. While it does not direct other NGOs, the American Red Cross takes the lead in integrating the efforts of the national NGOs that provide mass care services during response operations.
- ***National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (National VOAD).*** National VOAD<sup>16</sup> is the forum where organizations share knowledge and resources throughout the disaster cycle – preparation, response, and recovery – to help disaster survivors and their communities. National VOAD is a consortium of

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<sup>16</sup> Additional information is available at <http://www.nvoad.org>.

## CHAPTER I: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

approximately 50 national organizations and 55 State and territory equivalents. During major incidents, National VOAD typically sends representatives to the DHS/Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)'s National Response Coordination Center to represent the voluntary organizations and assist in response coordination.

**Volunteers and Donations.** Responding to incidents frequently exceeds the resources of government organizations. Volunteers and donors can support response efforts in many ways, and it is essential that governments at all levels plan ahead to effectively incorporate volunteers and donated goods into their response activities.

The Volunteer and Donations Management Support Annex provides detailed guidance from a national standpoint. State, tribal, and local planners should include similar volunteer and donations management provisions in their emergency plans.

For major incidents in which foreign governments, individuals, or organizations wish to make donations, the U.S. Department of State is responsible for managing such donations. Detailed guidance regarding the process for managing international donations is provided in the International Coordination Support Annex.<sup>17</sup>

## STATES, TERRITORIES, AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

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**A primary role of State government is to supplement and facilitate local efforts before, during, and after incidents.** The State provides direct and routine assistance to its local jurisdictions through emergency management program development and by routinely coordinating in these efforts with Federal officials. States must be prepared to maintain or accelerate the provision of commodities and services to local governments when local capabilities fall short of demands.

Under the *Framework*, the term "State" and discussion of the roles and responsibilities of States typically also include similar responsibilities that apply to U.S. territories and possessions and tribal governments. Under the Stafford Act, States are also responsible for requesting Federal emergency assistance for communities and tribal governments within their jurisdiction. In response to an incident, the State helps coordinate and integrate resources and applies them to local needs.

**Governor. Public safety and welfare of a State's citizens are fundamental responsibilities of every Governor.** For the purposes of the *Framework*, any reference to a State Governor also references the chief executive of a U.S. territory. The Governor:

- Is responsible for coordinating State resources and providing the strategic guidance needed to prevent, mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from incidents of all types.
- In accordance with State law, may be able to make, amend, or suspend certain orders or regulations associated with response.

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<sup>17</sup> The *Framework's* Support Annexes are available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

## CHAPTER I: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Communicates to the public and helps people, businesses, and organizations cope with the consequences of any type of incident.
- Commands the State military forces (National Guard personnel not in Federal service and State militias).
- Coordinates assistance from other States through interstate mutual aid and assistance compacts, such as the Emergency Management Assistance Compact.
- Requests Federal assistance including, if appropriate, a Stafford Act Presidential declaration of an emergency or major disaster, when it becomes clear that State capabilities will be insufficient or have been exceeded.
- Coordinates with impacted tribal governments within the State and initiates requests for a Stafford Act Presidential declaration of an emergency or major disaster on behalf of an impacted tribe when appropriate.

As noted in *A Governor's Guide to Homeland Security*,<sup>18</sup> before being sworn in, each new Governor should:

- *Avoid vacancies in key homeland security positions such as the State homeland security director or the State emergency manager. A newly elected Governor should work with his or her transition team to identify these key personnel early to minimize vacancies and encourage overlap with the outgoing administration. As soon as a new Governor selects people for these positions, the department or agency they are about to lead should be informed.*
- *Ensure that a staff able to manage a disaster response operation is in place on their inauguration day.*
- *Task their incoming gubernatorial staff, particularly the legal counsel, with reviewing the procedures necessary for them to declare a State emergency and use their emergency powers.*

**State Homeland Security Advisor.** The State Homeland Security Advisor serves as counsel to the Governor on homeland security issues and **may serve as a liaison between the Governor's office, the State homeland security structure, DHS, and other organizations both inside and outside of the State.** The advisor often chairs a committee comprised of representatives of relevant State agencies, including public safety, the National Guard, emergency management, public health, and others charged with developing prevention, protection, response, and recovery strategies. This also includes preparedness activities associated with these strategies.

**Director, State Emergency Management Agency.** All States have laws mandating establishment of a State emergency management agency and the emergency plans coordinated by that agency. **The Director of the State emergency management agency ensures that the State is prepared to deal with large-scale emergencies and is responsible for coordinating the State response in any incident.**

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<sup>18</sup> National Governors Association, *A Governor's Guide to Homeland Security*, 2007, p. 11. Available at <http://www.nga.org>.

## CHAPTER I: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This includes supporting local governments as needed or requested and coordinating assistance with other States and/or the Federal Government.

If local resources are not adequate, authorities can seek additional assistance from the county emergency manager or the State Director of Emergency Management. The State emergency management agency may dispatch personnel to the scene to assist in the response and recovery effort. If a jurisdiction requires resources beyond those available within the State, local agencies may request certain types of Federal assistance directly in non-Stafford Act situations. For example, the Environmental Protection Agency or U.S. Coast Guard may assess or mitigate oil or chemical spills **without waiting for requests from State, tribal, or local officials**. However, only the Governor can request a Presidential declaration under the Stafford Act.

**Other State Departments and Agencies.** State department and agency heads and their staffs develop, plan, and train to internal policies and procedures to meet response and recovery needs safely. They should also participate in interagency training and exercises to develop and maintain the necessary capabilities. They are vital to the State's overall emergency management and homeland security programs, as they bring expertise spanning the ESFs and serve as core members of the State emergency operations center.

**Indian Tribes.** The United States has a trust relationship with Indian tribes and recognizes their right to self-government. As such, tribal governments are responsible for coordinating resources to address actual or potential incidents. When local resources are not adequate, tribal leaders seek assistance from States or the Federal Government.

For certain types of Federal assistance, tribal governments work with the State, but as sovereign entities they can elect to deal directly with the Federal Government for other types of assistance. In order to obtain Federal assistance via the Stafford Act, **a State Governor must request a Presidential declaration on behalf of a tribe.**

**Tribal Leader.** The tribal leader is responsible for the public safety and welfare of the people of that tribe. As authorized by tribal government, the tribal leader:

- Is responsible for coordinating tribal resources needed to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from incidents of all types. This also includes preparedness and mitigation activities.
- May have powers to amend or suspend certain tribal laws or ordinances associated with response.
- Communicates with the tribal community, and helps people, businesses, and organizations cope with the consequences of any type of incident.
- Negotiates mutual aid and assistance agreements with other tribes or jurisdictions.
- Can request Federal assistance under the Stafford Act through the Governor of the State when it becomes clear that the tribe's capabilities will be insufficient or have been exceeded.
- Can elect to deal directly with the Federal Government. Although a State Governor must request a Presidential declaration on behalf of a tribe under the Stafford Act, Federal departments or agencies can work directly with the tribe within existing authorities and resources.

## FEDERAL

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When an incident occurs that exceeds or is anticipated to exceed local or State resources – or when an incident is managed by Federal departments or agencies acting under their own authorities – the Federal Government uses the *Framework* to involve all necessary department and agency capabilities, organize the Federal response, and ensure coordination with response partners.

The Federal Government's response structures are **scalable and flexible** – adaptable specifically to the nature and scope of a given incident. The Federal Government has strengthened its capabilities to act in emergencies, and to do so more quickly and comprehensively, based on lessons learned.

The principles of **unified command** are applied at the headquarters, regional, and field levels to enable diverse departments and agencies to work together effectively. Using unified command principles, participants share common goals and synchronize their activities to achieve those goals. The Federal Government also works to establish **engaged partnerships** with States, as well as the private sector. Our national response is more effective when all levels and branches of government work together well before an incident to develop effective plans and achieve a heightened state of preparedness.

**Coordination of Federal Responsibilities. The President leads the Federal Government response effort** to ensure that the necessary coordinating structures, leadership, and resources are applied quickly and efficiently to large-scale and catastrophic incidents. The President's **Homeland Security Council** and **National Security Council**, which bring together Cabinet officers and other department or agency heads as necessary, provide national strategic and policy advice to the President during large-scale incidents that affect the Nation.

Federal disaster assistance is often thought of as synonymous with Presidential declarations and the Stafford Act. The fact is that Federal assistance can be provided to State, tribal, and local jurisdictions, and to other Federal departments and agencies, in a number of different ways through various mechanisms and authorities. Often, Federal assistance does not require coordination by DHS and can be provided without a Presidential major disaster or emergency declaration. Examples of these types of Federal assistance include that described in the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan, the Mass Migration Emergency Plan, the National Search and Rescue Plan, and the National Maritime Security Plan. These and other supplemental agency or interagency plans, compacts, and agreements may be implemented concurrently with the *Framework*, but are subordinated to its overarching coordinating structures, processes, and protocols.

**When the overall coordination of Federal response activities is required, it is implemented through the Secretary of Homeland Security consistent with Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 5.** Other Federal departments and agencies carry out their response authorities and responsibilities within this overarching construct. **Nothing in this *Framework* alters or impedes the ability of Federal, State, tribal, or local departments and agencies to carry out their specific authorities or perform their responsibilities under all applicable laws, Executive orders, and directives.** Additionally, nothing in this *Framework* is intended to impact or impede the ability of any Federal department or agency to take an issue of concern directly to the President or any member of the President's staff.

## CHAPTER I: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Presidential directives<sup>19</sup> outline the following six primary lanes of responsibility that guide Federal support at national, regional, and field levels.

**Incident Management.** The **Secretary of Homeland Security** is the principal Federal official for domestic incident management. By Presidential directive and statute, the Secretary is responsible for coordination of Federal resources utilized in the prevention of, preparation for, response to, or recovery from terrorist attacks, major disasters, or other emergencies. The role of the Secretary of Homeland Security is to provide the President with an overall architecture for domestic incident management and to coordinate the Federal response, when required, while relying upon the support of other Federal partners. Depending upon the incident, the Secretary also contributes elements of the response consistent with DHS's mission, capabilities, and authorities.

The **FEMA Administrator**, as the principal advisor to the President, the Secretary, and the Homeland Security Council on all matters regarding emergency management,<sup>20</sup> helps the Secretary in meeting these HSPD-5 responsibilities.

Federal assistance for incidents that do not require DHS coordination may be led by other Federal departments and agencies consistent with their authorities. The Secretary of Homeland Security may monitor such incidents and may activate specific *Framework* mechanisms to provide support to departments and agencies without assuming overall leadership for the Federal response to the incident.

The following four HSPD-5 criteria define situations for which DHS shall assume overall Federal incident management coordination responsibilities within the *Framework* and implement the *Framework's* coordinating mechanisms: (1) a Federal department or agency acting under its own authority has requested DHS assistance, (2) the resources of State and local authorities are overwhelmed and Federal assistance has been requested, (3) more than one Federal department or agency has become substantially involved in responding to the incident, or (4) the Secretary has been directed by the President to assume incident management responsibilities.

**Law Enforcement.** The **Attorney General** is the chief law enforcement officer of the United States. Generally acting through the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Attorney General has the lead responsibility for criminal investigations of terrorist acts or terrorist threats by individuals or groups inside the United States or directed at U.S. citizens or institutions abroad, as well as for coordinating activities of the other members of the law enforcement community to detect, prevent, and disrupt terrorist attacks against the United States. This includes actions that are based on specific intelligence or law enforcement information. In addition, the Attorney General approves requests submitted by State Governors pursuant to the Emergency Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Act for personnel and other Federal law enforcement support during incidents. The Attorney General also enforces Federal civil rights laws and will provide expertise to ensure that these laws are appropriately addressed.

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<sup>19</sup> The core Presidential directive in this regard is HSPD-5, "Management of Domestic Incidents," which is available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

<sup>20</sup> See the Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act, enacted as part of the FY 2007 DHS Appropriations Act, P.L. 109-295.

## CHAPTER I: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**National Defense and Defense Support of Civil Authorities.** The primary mission of the Department of Defense (DOD) and its components is national defense. Because of this critical role, resources are committed after approval by the **Secretary of Defense** or at the direction of the **President**. Many DOD components and agencies are authorized to respond to save lives, protect property and the environment, and mitigate human suffering under imminently serious conditions, as well as to provide support under their separate established authorities, as appropriate. The provision of defense support is evaluated by its legality, lethality, risk, cost, appropriateness, and impact on readiness. When Federal military and civilian personnel and resources are authorized to support civil authorities, command of those forces will remain with the Secretary of Defense. DOD elements in the incident area of operations and National Guard forces under the command of a Governor will coordinate closely with response organizations at all levels.<sup>21</sup>

**International Coordination.** The **Secretary of State** is responsible for managing international preparedness, response, and recovery activities relating to domestic incidents and the protection of U.S. citizens and U.S. interests overseas.

**Intelligence.** The **Director of National Intelligence** leads the Intelligence Community, serves as the President's principal intelligence advisor, and oversees and directs the implementation of the National Intelligence Program.

**Other Federal Departments and Agencies.** Under the *Framework*, **various Federal departments or agencies may play primary, coordinating, and/or support roles based on their authorities and resources and the nature of the threat or incident.**<sup>22</sup>

In situations where a Federal department or agency has responsibility for directing or managing a major aspect of a response being coordinated by DHS, that organization is part of the national leadership for the incident and is represented in the field at the Joint Field Office in the Unified Coordination Group, and at headquarters through the National Operations Center and the National Response Coordination Center, which is part of the National Operations Center.<sup>23</sup>

In addition, several Federal departments and agencies have their own authorities to declare disasters or emergencies. For example, the Secretary of Health and Human Services can declare a public health emergency. These declarations may be made independently or as part of a coordinated Federal response. Where those declarations are part of an incident requiring a coordinated Federal response, those Federal departments or agencies act within the overall coordination structure of the *Framework*.

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<sup>21</sup> Additional information on DOD support is available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

<sup>22</sup> Additional information about the roles of Federal departments and agencies can be found in the annexes available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

<sup>23</sup> Additional information on these entities can be found in Chapter III, Response Organization.

## CHAPTER II

# RESPONSE ACTIONS

This chapter describes *what we as a Nation collectively do to respond to incidents.*

### INTRODUCTION

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The *Framework* is intended to strengthen, organize, and coordinate **response actions** across all levels. The doctrine of **tiered response** emphasizes that response to incidents should be handled at the lowest jurisdictional level capable of handling the work. The vast majority of incidents are, in fact, managed locally.

The *Framework* is focused on incidents of all types, including acts of terrorism, major disasters, and other emergencies. For the purpose of this document, the term "incident" refers to an actual or potential occurrence or event.

Responders and emergency managers are both doers and planners, which is to say that to lead **response** and **recovery** efforts effectively, they must also **prepare** effectively (i.e., plan, organize, equip, train, exercise, and continuously evaluate actual performance).

This chapter describes and outlines key tasks related to the **three phases of effective response: prepare, respond, and recover.**

Each member of our society – including our leaders, professional emergency managers, private-sector representatives, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) – has a role to play in strengthening the Nation's response capabilities. The discussion below provides an overview of the key tasks associated with preparedness, response, and recovery. In each case, the general discussion is augmented by examples of how the key tasks are tailored to align with the needs of responders and emergency managers at all levels.

**Mastery of these key tasks supports unity of effort, and thus improves our ability to save lives, protect property and the environment, and meet basic human needs.**

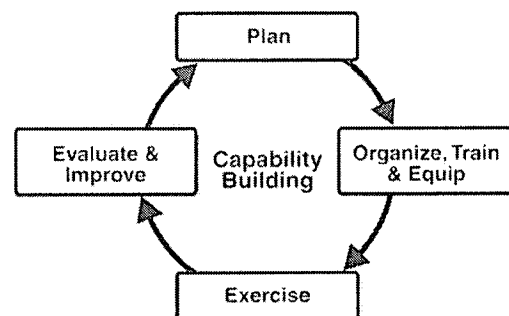
### PREPARE

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**Preparedness is essential for effective response.** This section discusses the six essential activities for responding to an incident: plan, organize, train, equip, exercise, and evaluate and improve.

Figure 2 illustrates the preparedness cycle.

**Figure 2. The Preparedness Cycle**



*The Preparedness Cycle Builds Capabilities*



## CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

### 1. PLAN

**Planning makes it possible to manage the entire life cycle of a potential crisis, determine capability requirements, and help stakeholders learn their roles.** It includes the collection and analysis of intelligence and information, as well as the development of policies, plans, procedures, mutual aid and assistance agreements, strategies, and other arrangements to perform missions and tasks. Planning also improves effectiveness by clearly defining required capabilities, shortening the time required to gain control of an incident, and facilitating the rapid exchange of information about a situation.

**Governments at all levels have a responsibility to develop detailed, robust, all-hazards response plans.** These plans should have clearly defined leadership roles and responsibilities, and they should clearly articulate the decisions that need to be made, who will make them, and when. These plans should include both hazard-specific as well as comprehensive all-hazards plans that are tailored to each respective jurisdiction. They should be integrated, operational, and incorporate key private-sector and NGO elements and persons with disabilities.

Among the many contingencies that response plans must address, planning for evacuations presents particular challenges. In this area, plans must include:

- The lead time required for various scenarios, including no-notice and forewarned events.
- Weather contingencies.
- Transportation.
- Interdependencies between shelter locations and transportation.
- Provisions for special needs populations and those with household pets.

Specific procedures and protocols should augment these plans to guide rapid implementation.

Virtually every Federal department and agency possesses personnel and resources that may be needed in response to an incident. Some Federal departments and agencies have primary responsibility for certain aspects of response, such as hazardous materials removal. Others may have supporting roles in providing different types of resources, such as communications personnel and equipment. Regardless of their roles, all Federal departments and agencies must develop policies, plans, and procedures governing how they will effectively locate resources and provide them as part of a coordinated response.

The Integrated Planning System is the national planning system used to develop interagency and intergovernmental plans based upon the National Planning Scenarios. Local, tribal, State, regional, and Federal plans are mutually supportive. See Chapter IV for significant additional detail regarding planning.

## 2. ORGANIZE

**Organizing to execute response activities includes developing an overall organizational structure, strengthening leadership at each level, and assembling well-qualified teams of paid and volunteer staff for essential response and recovery tasks.** The *National Incident Management System (NIMS)* provides standard command and management structures that apply to response. This common system enables responders from different jurisdictions and disciplines to work together to respond to incidents.

**Governments at all levels should organize to support effective response.** The leader of each government organization should vest the official responsible for response activities with sufficient authority to meet the organization's responsibilities under the *Framework*.

Government agencies at all levels are encouraged to conduct a thorough, systematic inventory of their response resources and to conform to *NIMS* organizational and management principles as noted above. Government agencies should also ensure they have a cadre of personnel (which can include full-time employees, temporary or surge personnel, and contractors) who are trained in incident management and response principles and organized into teams. Personnel and equipment can be organized to provide a particular function or mission capability.

**Governments at all levels should use the *NIMS* resource management principles described below to enhance response capabilities.**

- **Individual Resources.** Resources are organized by category, kind, size, capacity, skill, and other characteristics. This organization makes resource management more efficient and ensures that similar resources from different agencies are organized according to standard principles.
- **Emergency Support Functions.** The Federal Government and many State governments organize much of their resources and capabilities – as well as those of certain private-sector and nongovernmental organizations – under 15 Emergency Support Functions (ESFs). ESFs align categories of resources and provide strategic objectives for their use. ESFs utilize standardized resource management concepts such as typing, inventorying, and tracking to facilitate the dispatch, deployment, and recovery of resources before, during, and after an incident. ESF coordinators and primary agencies are identified on the basis of authorities and resources. Support agencies are assigned based on the availability of resources in a given functional area. ESFs provide the greatest possible access to Federal department and agency resources regardless of which organization has those resources. See Chapter III for significant additional detail regarding ESFs.<sup>24</sup>
- **Pre-Scripted Mission Assignments.** The Federal Government and many State governments use pre-scripted mission assignments to assist in planning and to reduce the time it takes to deploy response resources. Pre-scripted mission assignments identify resources or capabilities of government organizations that are commonly called upon during response to an incident. Pre-scripted mission assignments allow primary and supporting ESF agencies to organize resources that can be tailored to develop, train, and exercise rosters of deployable response

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<sup>24</sup> ESF Annexes are available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

## CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

personnel. All local, tribal, and State governments are encouraged to use pre-scripted mission assignments to expedite the delivery of services and commodities in response to an incident.

- **Advanced Readiness Contracting.** While the Federal Government and many State governments have tremendous resources on hand to support local governments, certain resources are more efficiently deployed when procured from the private sector. Advanced readiness contracting ensures that contracts are in place before an incident for commonly needed commodities and services such as ice, water, plastic sheeting, temporary power, and debris removal. This type of contracting improves the ability to secure supplies and services by streamlining the process of ordering, acquiring, and distributing resources when needed.
- **Pre-Positioned Resources.** Since virtually all incidents are local in nature, resources should be positioned close to those localities most at risk for particular types of events. For example, the Federal Government pre-positions resource stockpiles to leverage the geographic distribution of Federal regional, district, and field offices across the country. Additionally, federally administered response networks such as the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System and the National Disaster Medical System utilize locally sponsored resources to enhance Federal response efforts, reduce response times, and strengthen preparedness in their communities.

### 3. EQUIP

**Local, tribal, State, and Federal jurisdictions need to establish a common understanding of the capabilities of distinct types of response equipment.** This facilitates planning before an incident, as well as rapid scaling and flexibility in meeting the needs of an incident. A critical component of preparedness is the acquisition of equipment that will perform to established standards, including the capability to be interoperable with equipment used by other jurisdictions and/or participating organizations.

Effective preparedness requires jurisdictions to identify and have strategies to obtain and deploy major equipment, supplies, facilities, and systems in sufficient quantities to perform assigned missions and tasks. The mobilization, tracking, use, sustaining, and demobilization of physical and human resources require an effective logistics system. That system must support both the residents in need and the teams that are responding to the incident. Resource typing provides a uniform method of sharing commonly understood resources when needed in a major incident.

Governments at all levels should ensure that their personnel have the necessary resources to perform assigned response missions and tasks. This includes obtaining equipment needed to conduct specific response missions and maintaining core capabilities to communicate effectively among Federal, State, tribal, and local responders using the incident management and response structures described in the *Framework*.

Government organizations responsible for providing equipment for response activities should bundle that equipment into standardized equipment caches and be prepared to provide for its safe transportation. They must also routinely service and maintain such equipment and support the resources needed to maintain, repair, and operate it in the field.

## CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

### 4. TRAIN

**Building essential response capabilities nationwide requires a systematic program to train individual teams and organizations – to include governmental, nongovernmental, private-sector, and voluntary organizations – to meet a common baseline of performance and certification standards.** Professionalism and experience are the foundation upon which successful response is built. Rigorous, ongoing training is thus imperative.<sup>25</sup>

Individuals and teams, whether paid or volunteer, should meet relevant local, tribal, State, Federal, or professional qualifications, certifications, or performance standards. Content and methods of training must comply with applicable standards and produce required skills and measurable proficiency. FEMA and other organizations offer response and incident management training in online and classroom formats.

### 5. EXERCISE

**Exercises provide opportunities to test plans and improve proficiency in a risk-free environment.** Exercises assess and validate proficiency levels. They also clarify and familiarize personnel with roles and responsibilities. Well-designed exercises improve interagency coordination and communications, highlight capability gaps, and identify opportunities for improvement. Exercises should:

- Include multidisciplinary, multijurisdictional incidents.
- Include participation of private-sector and nongovernmental organizations.
- Cover aspects of preparedness plans, particularly the processes and procedures for activating local, intrastate, or interstate mutual aid and assistance agreements.
- Contain a mechanism for incorporating corrective actions.

**Local, tribal, State, and Federal jurisdictions should exercise their own response capabilities and evaluate their abilities to perform expected responsibilities and tasks.** This is a basic responsibility of all entities and is distinct from participation in other interagency exercise programs.

In addition, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) coordinates the National Exercise Program,<sup>26</sup> which requires Federal departments and agencies to participate in an exercise program based upon the National Planning Scenarios contained in the *National Preparedness Guidelines*. This program coordinates and, where appropriate, integrates a 5-year homeland security exercise schedule across Federal agencies and incorporates exercises at the State and local levels.

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<sup>25</sup> Links to training resources are available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

<sup>26</sup> The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) provides a standardized policy, methodology, and language for designing, developing, conducting, and evaluating all exercises. Information on HSEEP and the National Exercise Program is available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

## 6. EVALUATE AND IMPROVE

Evaluation and continual process improvement are cornerstones of effective preparedness. Upon concluding an exercise, jurisdictions should evaluate performance against relevant capability objectives, identify deficits, and institute corrective action plans. Improvement planning should develop specific recommendations for changes in practice, timelines for implementation, and assignments for completion.

**All local, tribal, State, and Federal entities should institute a corrective action program to evaluate exercise participation and response, capture lessons learned, and make improvements in their response capabilities.** An active corrective action program will provide a method and define roles and responsibilities for identification, prioritization, assignment, monitoring, and reporting of corrective actions arising from exercises and real-world events. The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) Toolkit is a Web-based system that enables implementation of the corrective action program process. In this way, the continuous cycle of preparedness yields enhancements to national preparedness.

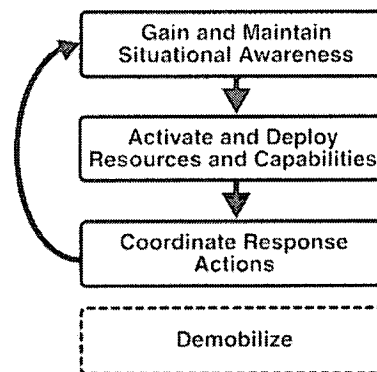
## RESPOND

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**Once an incident occurs, priorities shift – from building capabilities to employing resources to save lives, protect property and the environment, and preserve the social, economic, and political structure of the jurisdiction.** Depending on the size, scope, and magnitude of an incident, communities, States, and, in some cases, the Federal Government will be called to action.

Four key actions typically occur in support of a response: (1) gain and maintain situational awareness; (2) activate and deploy key resources and capabilities; (3) effectively coordinate response actions; then, as the situation permits, (4) demobilize. These response actions are illustrated in Figure 3, and their core elements are described below.

Figure 3. The Response Process



### 1. GAIN AND MAINTAIN SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

**Baseline Priorities. Situational awareness requires continuous monitoring of relevant sources of information regarding actual and developing incidents.** The scope and type of monitoring vary based on the type of incidents being evaluated and needed reporting thresholds. Critical information is passed through established reporting channels according to established security protocols. Priorities include:

- **Providing the right information at the right time.** For an effective national response, jurisdictions must continuously refine their ability to assess the situation as an incident unfolds and rapidly provide accurate and accessible information to decisionmakers in a user-friendly manner. It is essential that all levels of government, the private sector (in particular, owners/operators of critical

## CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

infrastructure and key resources (CIKR)), and NGOs share information to develop a common operating picture and synchronize their response operations and resources.

- **Improving and integrating national reporting.** Situational awareness must start at the incident scene and be effectively communicated to local, tribal, State, and Federal governments and the private sector, to include CIKR. Jurisdictions must integrate existing reporting systems to develop an information and knowledge management system that fulfills national information requirements.
- **Linking operations centers and tapping subject-matter experts.** Local governments, tribes, States, and the Federal Government have a wide range of operations centers that monitor events and provide situational awareness. Based on their roles and responsibilities, operations centers should identify information requirements, establish reporting thresholds, and be familiar with the expectations of decisionmakers and partners. Situational awareness is greatly improved when experienced technical specialists identify critical elements of information and use them to form a common operating picture.

Reporting and documentation procedures should be standardized to enhance situational awareness and provide emergency management and response personnel with ready access to critical information. Situation reports should contain verified information and explicit details (who, what, where, when, and how) related to the incident. Status reports, which may be contained in situation reports, relay specific information about resources. Based on an analysis of the threats, jurisdictions issue accessible warnings to the public and provide emergency public information.

**Local, Tribal, and State Actions.** Local, tribal, and State governments can address the inherent challenges in establishing successful information-sharing networks by:

- Creating fusion centers that bring together into one central location law enforcement, intelligence, emergency management, public health, and other agencies, as well as private-sector and nongovernmental organizations when appropriate, and that have the capabilities to evaluate and act appropriately on all available information.
- Implementing the National Information Sharing Guidelines to share intelligence and information and improve the ability of systems to exchange data.
- Establishing information requirements and reporting protocols to enable effective and timely decisionmaking during response to incidents. Terrorist threats and actual incidents with a potential or actual terrorist link should be reported immediately to a local or regional Joint Terrorism Task Force.

**Federal Actions.** The National Operations Center (NOC) serves as the national fusion center, collecting and synthesizing all-source information, including information from State fusion centers, across all-threats and all-hazards information covering the spectrum of homeland security partners. Federal departments and agencies should report information regarding actual or potential incidents requiring a coordinated Federal response to the NOC.

## CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

Such information may include:

- Implementation of a Federal department or agency emergency plan.
- Actions to prevent or respond to an incident requiring a coordinated Federal response for which a Federal department or agency has responsibility under law or directive.
- Submission of requests for coordinated Federal assistance to, or receipt of a request from, another Federal department or agency.
- Requests for coordinated Federal assistance from State, tribal, or local governments, the private sector, and NGOs.
- Suspicious activities or threats, which are closely coordinated among the Department of Justice/Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Strategic Information and Operations Center (SIOC), the NOC, and the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC).

The primary reporting method for information flow is the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN). Additionally, there are threat reporting mechanisms in place through the FBI where information is assessed for credibility and possible criminal investigation. Each Federal department and agency must work with DHS to ensure that its response personnel have access to and are trained to use the HSIN common operating picture for incident reporting.<sup>27</sup>

**Alerts.** When notified of a threat or an incident that potentially requires a coordinated Federal response, the **NOC evaluates the information and notifies appropriate senior Federal officials and Federal operations centers:** the National Response Coordination Center (NRCC), the FBI SIOC, the NCTC, and the National Military Command Center. The NOC serves as the primary coordinating center for these and other operations centers.

The NOC alerts department and agency leadership to critical information to inform decisionmaking. Based on that information, the Secretary of Homeland Security coordinates with other appropriate departments and agencies to activate plans and applicable coordination structures of the *Framework* as required. Officials should be prepared to participate, either in person or by secure video teleconference, with departments or agencies involved in responding to the incident. The NOC maintains the common operating picture that provides overall situational awareness for incident information. Each Federal department and agency must ensure that its response personnel are trained to utilize these tools.

**Operations Centers.** Federal operations centers maintain active situational awareness and communications within and among Federal department and agency regional, district, and sector offices across the country. These operations centers are often connected with their State, tribal, and local counterparts, and can exchange information and draw and direct resources in the event of an incident.

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<sup>27</sup> Additional information concerning HSIN and Federal reporting requirements is found in the *HSIN Concept of Operations*, available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

## 2. ACTIVATE AND DEPLOY RESOURCES AND CAPABILITIES

**Baseline Priorities.** When an incident or potential incident occurs, responders assess the situation, identify and prioritize requirements, and activate available resources and capabilities to save lives, protect property and the environment, and meet basic human needs. In most cases, this includes development of incident objectives based on incident priorities, development of an **Incident Action Plan** by the Incident Command in the field, and development of support plans by the appropriate local, tribal, State, and/or Federal Government entities. Key activities include:

- **Activating people, resources, and capabilities.** Across all levels, initial actions may include activation of people and teams and establishment of incident management and response structures to organize and coordinate an effective response. The resources and capabilities deployed and the activation of supporting incident management structures should be directly related to the size, scope, nature, and complexity of the incident. All responders should maintain and regularly exercise notification systems and protocols.
- **Requesting additional resources and capabilities.** Responders and capabilities may be requested through mutual aid and assistance agreements, the State, or the Federal Government. For all incidents, especially large-scale incidents, it is essential to prioritize and clearly communicate incident requirements so that resources can be efficiently matched, typed, and mobilized to support operations.
- **Identifying needs and pre-positioning resources.** When planning for heightened threats or in anticipation of large-scale incidents, local or tribal jurisdictions, States, or the Federal Government should anticipate resources and capabilities that may be needed. Based on asset availability, resources should be pre-positioned and response teams and other support resources may be placed on alert or deployed to a staging area. As noted above, mobilization and deployment will be most effective when supported by planning that includes pre-scripted mission assignments, advance readiness contracting, and staged resources.

**Local, Tribal, and State Actions.** In the event of, or in anticipation of, an incident requiring a coordinated response, local, tribal, and State jurisdictions should:

- Identify staff for deployment to the **emergency operations center (EOC)**, which should have standard procedures and call-down lists to notify department and agency points of contact.
- Work with emergency management officials to take the necessary steps to provide for continuity of operations.
- Activate **Incident Management Teams (IMTs)** as required. IMTs are incident command organizations made up of the command and general staff members and appropriate functional units of an Incident Command System organization. The level of training and experience of the IMT members, coupled with the identified formal response requirements and responsibilities of the IMT, are factors in determining the "type," or level, of the IMT.
- Activate **specialized response teams** as required. Jurisdictions may have specialized teams including search and rescue teams, crime scene investigators,



## CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

public works teams, hazardous materials response teams, public health specialists, or veterinarians/animal response teams.

- Activate **mutual aid and assistance agreements** as required.

**Federal Actions.** In the event of, or in anticipation of, an incident requiring a coordinated Federal response, the National Operations Center, in many cases acting through the National Response Coordination Center, notifies other Federal departments and agencies of the situation and specifies the level of activation required. After being notified, departments and agencies should:

- Identify and mobilize staff to fulfill their department's or agency's responsibilities, including identifying appropriate subject-matter experts and other staff to support department operations centers.
- Identify staff for deployment to the NOC, the NRCC, FEMA Regional Response Coordination Centers (RRCCs), or other operations centers as needed, such as the FBI's Joint Operations Center. These organizations have standard procedures and call-down lists, and will notify department or agency points of contact if deployment is necessary.
- Identify staff that can be dispatched to the Joint Field Office (JFO), including Federal officials representing those departments and agencies with specific authorities, lead personnel for the JFO Sections (Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Administration and Finance) and the ESFs.
- Begin activating and staging Federal teams and other resources in support of the Federal response as requested by DHS or in accordance with department or agency authorities.
- Execute pre-scripted mission assignments and readiness contracts, as directed by DHS.

Some Federal departments or agencies may deploy to an incident under their own authorities. In these instances, Federal departments or agencies will notify the appropriate entities such as the NOC, JFO, State EOCs, and the local Incident Command.

### 3. COORDINATE RESPONSE ACTIONS

**Baseline Priorities.** Coordination of response activities occurs through response structures based on assigned roles, responsibilities, and reporting protocols. Critical information is provided through established reporting mechanisms. The efficiency and effectiveness of response operations are enhanced by full application of the *NIMS* with its common principles, structures, and coordinating processes. Specific priorities include:

- **Managing emergency functions.** *Local, tribal, and State governments are responsible for the management of their emergency functions.* Such management includes mobilizing the National Guard, pre-positioning assets, and supporting communities. Local, tribal, and State governments, in conjunction with their voluntary organization partners, are also responsible for implementing plans to

## CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

ensure the effective management of the flow of volunteers and goods in the affected area.

- **Coordinating initial actions.** Initial actions are coordinated through the on-scene Incident Command and may include: immediate law enforcement, rescue, firefighting, and emergency medical services; emergency flood fighting; evacuations; transportation detours; and emergency information for the public. As the incident unfolds, the on-scene Incident Command develops and updates an Incident Action Plan, revising courses of action based on changing circumstances.
- **Coordinating requests for additional support.** If additional resources are required, the on-scene Incident Command requests the needed support. Additional incident management and response structures and personnel are activated to support the response. It is critical that personnel understand roles, structures, protocols, and concepts to ensure clear, coordinated actions. Resources are activated through established procedures and integrated into a standardized organizational structure at the appropriate levels.
- **Identifying and integrating resources and capabilities.** Resources and capabilities must be deployed, received, staged, and efficiently integrated into ongoing operations. For large, complex incidents, this may include working with a diverse array of organizations, including multiple private-sector entities and NGOs through prearranged agreements and contracts. Large-scale events may also require sophisticated coordination and time-phased deployment of resources through an integrated logistics system. Systems and venues must be established to receive, stage, track, and integrate resources into ongoing operations. Incident Command should continually assess operations and scale and adapt existing plans to meet evolving circumstances.
- **Coordinating information.** Effective public information strategies are essential following an incident. Incident Command may elect to establish a Joint Information Center (JIC), a physical location where the coordination and dissemination of information for the public and media concerning the incident are managed. JICs may be established locally, regionally, or nationally depending on the size and magnitude of an incident. In the event of incidents requiring a coordinated Federal response, JICs are established to coordinate Federal, State, tribal, local, and private-sector incident communications with the public. By developing media lists, contact information for relevant stakeholders, and coordinated news releases, the JIC staff facilitates dissemination of accurate, consistent, accessible, and timely public information to numerous audiences.

**Specific response actions will vary depending upon the scope and nature of the incident.** Response actions are based on the objectives established by the Incident Command and Unified Coordination Group. Response actions include, but are not limited to:

- Warning the public and providing accessible emergency public information.
- Implementing evacuation and sheltering plans that include provisions for special needs populations and household pets.

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- Sheltering evacuees in preidentified, physically accessible shelters and providing food, water, and other necessities to meet the needs of all people, including persons with disabilities and other special needs.
- Performing search and rescue.
- Treating the injured.
- Providing law enforcement and investigation.
- Controlling hazards (extinguishing fires, containing hazardous materials spills, etc.).
- Ensuring responder safety and health.

**Local, Tribal, and State Actions.** Within communities, *NIMS* principles are applied to integrate response plans and resources across jurisdictions and departments and with the private sector and NGOs. **Neighboring communities play a key role in providing support through a framework of mutual aid and assistance agreements.** These agreements are formal documents that identify the resources that communities are willing to share during an incident. Such agreements should include:

- Definitions of key terms used in the agreement.
- Roles and responsibilities of individual parties.
- Procedures for requesting and providing assistance.
- Procedures, authorities, and rules for allocation and reimbursement of costs.
- Notification procedures.
- Protocols for interoperable communications.
- Relationships with other agreements among jurisdictions.
- Treatment of workers' compensation, liability, and immunity.
- Recognition of qualifications and certifications.

While States typically act as the conduit between the Federal and local governments when Federal assistance is supporting a local jurisdiction, there are certain instances in which Federal partners may play an active role in a unified command. For example, wildfires on Federal land or oil spills are activities for which certain Federal departments or agencies may have authority to respond under their own statutes and jurisdictions.

**States provide the majority of the external assistance to communities.** The State is the gateway to several government programs that help communities prepare. When an incident grows beyond the capability of a local jurisdiction, and responders cannot meet the needs with mutual aid and assistance resources, the local emergency manager contacts the State. Upon receiving a request for assistance from a local government, immediate State response activities may include:

## CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

- Coordinating warnings and public information through the activation of the State's public communications strategy and the establishment of a JIC.
- Distributing supplies stockpiled to meet the emergency.
- Providing needed technical assistance and support to meet the response and recovery needs of individuals and households.
- The Governor suspending existing statutes, rules, ordinances, and orders for the duration of the emergency, to the extent permitted by law, to ensure timely performance of response functions.
- Implementing State donations management plans and coordinating with NGOs and the private sector.
- Ordering the evacuation of persons from any portions of the State threatened by the incident, giving consideration to the requirements of special needs populations and those with household pets or service animals.
- Mobilizing resources to meet the requirements of people with special needs, in accordance with the State's preexisting plan and in compliance with Federal civil rights laws.

In addition to these actions, the Governor may activate elements of the National Guard. The National Guard is a crucial State resource, with expertise in communications, logistics, search and rescue, and decontamination. **National Guard forces employed under State Active Duty or Title 32 status are under the command and control of the Governor of their State and are not part of Federal military response efforts.**

Title 32 Full-Time National Guard Duty refers to Federal training or other duty, other than inactive duty, performed by a member of the National Guard. Title 32 is not subject to *posse comitatus* restrictions<sup>28</sup> and allows the Governor, with the approval of the President or the Secretary of Defense, to order a Guard member to duty to:

- Perform training and other operational activities.
- Conduct homeland defense activities for the military protection of the territory or domestic population of the United States, or of the infrastructure or other assets of the United States determined by the Secretary of Defense to be critical to national security, from a threat or aggression against the United States.

In rare circumstances, the President can federalize National Guard forces for domestic duties under Title 10 (e.g., in cases of invasion by a foreign nation, rebellion against the authority of the United States, or where the President is unable to execute the laws of the United States with regular forces (10 U.S.C. 12406)). When mobilized under Title 10 of the U.S. Code, the forces are no longer under the command of the Governor. Instead, the Department of Defense assumes full responsibility for all aspects of the deployment, including command and control over National Guard forces.

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<sup>28</sup> For more information on *posse comitatus*, see the Authorities and References section of the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

## CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

**State-to-State Assistance.** If additional resources are required, the State should request assistance from other States by using interstate mutual aid and assistance agreements such as the **Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC)**. Administered by the National Emergency Management Association, EMAC is a congressionally ratified organization that provides form and structure to the interstate mutual aid and assistance process. Through EMAC or other mutual aid or assistance agreements, a State can request and receive assistance from other member States.<sup>29</sup> Such State-to-State assistance may include:

- Invoking and administering a Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement, as well as coordinating the allocation of resources under that agreement.
- Invoking and administering EMAC and/or other compacts and agreements, and coordinating the allocation of resources that are made available to and from other States.

**Requesting Federal Assistance.** When an incident overwhelms or is anticipated to overwhelm State resources, the Governor may request Federal assistance.<sup>30</sup> In such cases, the affected local jurisdiction, tribe, State, and the Federal Government will collaborate to provide the necessary assistance. The Federal Government may provide assistance in the form of funding, resources, and critical services. **Federal departments and agencies respect the sovereignty and responsibilities of local, tribal, and State governments while rendering assistance.** The intention of the Federal Government in these situations is not to command the response, but rather to support the affected local, tribal, and/or State governments.

**Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.** When it is clear that State capabilities will be exceeded, the Governor can request Federal assistance, including assistance under the **Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act)**.<sup>31</sup> The Stafford Act authorizes the President to provide financial and other assistance to State and local governments, certain private nonprofit organizations, and individuals to support response, recovery, and mitigation efforts following Presidential emergency or major disaster declarations.

The Stafford Act is triggered by a Presidential declaration of a major disaster or emergency, when an event causes damage of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant Federal disaster assistance to supplement the efforts and available resources of States, local governments, and the disaster relief organizations in alleviating the damage, loss, hardship, or suffering.

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<sup>29</sup> For more detail about EMAC, see <http://www.emacweb.org/>.

<sup>30</sup> Additional guidance on requesting Federal support can be found in the Overview document at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

<sup>31</sup> Details regarding Federal involvement under the Stafford Act are available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>. Additional information about the Stafford Act's disaster process and disaster aid programs is available at <http://www.fema.gov/hazard/dproc.shtm>.

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The forms of public assistance typically flow either from a major disaster declaration or an emergency declaration.<sup>32</sup> A **major disaster** could result from any natural or manmade event that the President determines warrants supplemental Federal aid. The event must be clearly more than State or local governments can handle alone.

If declared, funding comes from the President's Disaster Relief Fund, which is managed by FEMA, and the disaster aid programs of other participating Federal departments and agencies. A **Presidential major disaster declaration** triggers long-term Federal recovery programs, some of which are matched by State programs, and designed to help disaster victims, businesses, and public entities. An **emergency declaration** is more limited in scope and without the long-term Federal recovery programs of a major disaster declaration. Generally, Federal assistance and funding are provided to meet a specific emergency need or to help prevent a major disaster from occurring.

**Requesting a Presidential Declaration.** Most incidents are not of sufficient magnitude to warrant a Presidential declaration. However, if State and local resources are insufficient, a **Governor may ask the President to make such a declaration.** Before making a declaration request, the Governor must activate the State's emergency plan and ensure that all appropriate State and local actions have been taken or initiated, including:

- Surveying the affected areas to determine the extent of private and public damage.
- Conducting joint preliminary damage assessments with FEMA officials to estimate the types and extent of Federal disaster assistance required.
- Consulting with the FEMA Regional Administrator on Federal disaster assistance eligibility, and advising the FEMA regional office if a Presidential declaration will be requested.

Ordinarily, only a Governor can initiate a request for a Presidential emergency or major disaster declaration. In extraordinary circumstances, the President may unilaterally declare a major disaster or emergency.<sup>33</sup> This **request is made through the FEMA Regional Administrator** and based on a finding that the disaster is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and affected local governments, and that Federal assistance is necessary. The request must include:

- Information on the extent and nature of State resources that have been or will be used to address the consequences of the disaster.
- A certification by the Governor that State and local governments will assume all applicable non-Federal costs required by the Stafford Act.
- An estimate of the types and amounts of supplementary Federal assistance required.

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<sup>32</sup> The Stafford Act defines an **emergency** as "any occasion or instance for which, in the determination of the President, Federal assistance is needed to supplement State and local efforts and capabilities to save lives and to protect property and public health and safety, or to lessen or avert the threat of a catastrophe in any part of the United States." A **major disaster** is defined as "any natural catastrophe (including any hurricane, tornado, storm, high water, wind-driven water, tidal wave, tsunami, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mudslide, snowstorm, or drought), or, regardless of cause, any fire, flood, or explosion in any part of the United States, which in the determination of the President causes damage of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant major disaster assistance under this Act to supplement the efforts and available resources of States, local governments, and disaster relief organizations in alleviating the damage, loss, hardship, or suffering caused thereby."

<sup>33</sup> Per section 501(b) of the Stafford Act.

## CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

- Designation of a State Coordinating Officer.

The completed request, addressed to the President, is submitted through the FEMA Regional Administrator, who evaluates the damage and requirements for Federal assistance and makes a recommendation to the FEMA Administrator. The FEMA Administrator, acting through the Secretary of Homeland Security, may then recommend a course of action to the President. The Governor, appropriate Members of Congress, and Federal departments and agencies are immediately notified of a Presidential declaration.

### **Proactive Response to Catastrophic**

**Incidents.** Prior to and during catastrophic incidents, especially those that occur with little or no notice, the State and Federal governments may take proactive measures to mobilize and deploy assets in anticipation of a formal request from the State for Federal assistance.<sup>34</sup> Such deployments of significant Federal assets would likely occur for catastrophic events involving chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or high-yield explosive weapons of mass destruction, large-magnitude earthquakes, or other catastrophic incidents affecting heavily populated areas. The proactive responses are utilized to ensure that resources reach the scene in a timely manner to assist in restoring any disruption of normal function of State or local governments. Proactive notification and deployment of Federal resources in anticipation of or in response to catastrophic events will be done in coordination and collaboration with State, tribal, and local governments and private-sector entities when possible.

**A catastrophic incident is defined as any natural or manmade incident, including terrorism, that results in extraordinary levels of mass casualties, damage, or disruption severely affecting the population, infrastructure, environment, economy, national morale, and/or government functions.**

**Federal Assistance Available Without a Presidential Declaration.** In many cases, assistance may be obtained from the Federal Government without a Presidential declaration. For example, FEMA places liaisons in State EOCs and moves commodities near incident sites that may require Federal assistance prior to a Presidential declaration. Additionally, some types of assistance, such as Fire Management Assistance Grants – which provide support to States experiencing severe wildfires – are performed by Federal departments or agencies under their own authorities and do not require Presidential approval. Finally, Federal departments and agencies may provide immediate lifesaving assistance to States under their own statutory authorities without a formal Presidential declaration.

**Other Federal or Federally Facilitated Assistance.** The *Framework* covers the full range of complex and constantly changing requirements in anticipation of, or in response to, threats or actual incidents, including terrorism and major disasters. In addition to Stafford Act support, the *Framework* may be applied to provide other forms of support to Federal partners. Federal departments and agencies must remain flexible and adaptable in order to provide the support that is required for a particular incident.

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<sup>34</sup> Additional information on proactive response can be found in the Catastrophic Incident Annex, available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

## CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

**Federal-to-Federal Support.** Federal departments and agencies execute interagency or intra-agency reimbursable agreements, in accordance with the Economy Act or other applicable authorities. The *Framework's* Financial Management Support Annex<sup>35</sup> contains additional information on this process. Additionally, a Federal department or agency responding to an incident under its own jurisdictional authorities may request DHS coordination to obtain additional Federal assistance.

In such cases, DHS may activate one or more Emergency Support Functions to coordinate required support. Federal departments and agencies must plan for Federal-to-Federal support missions, identify additional issues that may arise when providing assistance to other Federal departments and agencies, and address those issues in the planning process. When providing Federal-to-Federal support, DHS may designate a Federal Resource Coordinator to perform the resource coordination function.

**International Assistance.** A domestic incident may have international and diplomatic implications that call for coordination and consultations with foreign governments and international organizations. An incident may also require direct bilateral and multilateral actions on foreign affairs issues related to the incident. The Department of State has responsibility for coordinating bilateral and multilateral actions, and for coordinating international assistance. International coordination within the context of a domestic incident requires close cooperative efforts with foreign counterparts, multilateral/international organizations, and the private sector. Federal departments and agencies should consider in advance what resources or other assistance they may require or be asked to accept from foreign sources and address issues that may arise in receiving such resources. Detailed information on coordination with international partners is further defined in the International Coordination Support Annex.<sup>36</sup>

**Response Activities.** Specific response actions will vary depending upon the scope and nature of an incident. Response actions are based on the objectives established by the Incident Command and Joint Field Office (JFO)'s Unified Coordination Group. Detailed information about the full range of potential response capabilities is contained in the Emergency Support Function Annexes, Incident Annexes, and Support Annexes. See Chapter V for additional detail about these items.

**Department and Agency Activities.** Federal departments and agencies, upon receiving notification or activation requests, implement their specific emergency plans to activate resources and organize their response actions. Department and agency plans should incorporate procedures for:

- Designation of department or agency representatives for interagency coordination, and identification of State, tribal, and local points of contact.
- Activation of coordination groups managed by the department or agency in accordance with roles and responsibilities.
- Activation, mobilization, deployment, and ongoing status reporting for resource-typed teams with responsibilities for providing capabilities under the *Framework*.

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<sup>35</sup> Available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

<sup>36</sup> Available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.



## CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

- Readiness to execute mission assignments in response to requests for assistance (including pre-scripted mission assignments), and to support all levels of department or agency participation in the response, at both the field and national levels.
- Ensuring that department or agency resources (e.g., personnel, teams, or equipment) fit into the interagency structures and processes set out in the *Framework*.

**Regional Response Activities.** The FEMA Regional Administrator deploys a liaison to the State EOC to provide technical assistance and also activates the Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC). Federal department and agency personnel, including ESF primary and support agency personnel, staff the RRCC as required. The RRCCs:

- Coordinate initial regional and field activities.
- In coordination with State, tribal, and local officials, deploy regional teams to assess the impact of the event, gauge immediate State needs, and make preliminary arrangements to set up operational field facilities.
- Coordinate Federal support until a JFO is established.
- Establish a JIC to provide a central point for coordinating emergency public information activities.

**Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT).** In coordination with the RRCC and the State, FEMA may deploy an IMAT. IMATs are interagency teams composed of subject-matter experts and incident management professionals. IMAT personnel may be drawn from national or regional Federal department and agency staff according to established protocols. IMAT teams make preliminary arrangements to set up Federal field facilities and initiate establishment of the JFO.

**Emergency Support Functions (ESFs).** The NRCC or RRCC may also activate specific ESFs by directing appropriate departments and agencies to initiate the initial actions delineated in the ESF Annexes.<sup>37</sup>

### 4. DEMOBILIZE

Demobilization is the orderly, safe, and efficient return of a resource to its original location and status. Demobilization should begin as soon as possible to facilitate accountability of the resources and be fully coordinated with other incident management and response structures.

**Local, Tribal, and State Actions.** At the local, tribal, and State levels, demobilization planning and activities should include:

- Provisions to address and validate the safe return of resources to their original locations.
- Processes for tracking resources and ensuring applicable reimbursement.

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<sup>37</sup> Available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

## CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

- Accountability for compliance with mutual aid and assistance provisions.

**Federal Actions.** The Unified Coordination Group oversees the development of an exit strategy and demobilization plan. As the need for full-time interagency response coordination at the JFO wanes, the Unified Coordination Group plans for selective release of Federal resources, demobilization, transfer of responsibilities, and closeout. The JFO, however, continues to operate as needed into the recovery phase to coordinate those resources that are still active. ESF representatives assist in demobilizing resources and organizing their orderly return to regular operations, warehouses, or other locations.

## RECOVER

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**Once immediate lifesaving activities are complete, the focus shifts to assisting individuals, households, critical infrastructure, and businesses in meeting basic needs and returning to self-sufficiency.** Even as the immediate imperatives for response to an incident are being addressed, the need to begin recovery operations emerges. The emphasis upon response will gradually give way to recovery operations. Within recovery, actions are taken to help individuals, communities, and the Nation return to normal. Depending on the complexity of this phase, recovery and cleanup efforts involve significant contributions from all sectors of our society.

- **Short-term recovery** is immediate and overlaps with response. It includes actions such as providing essential public health and safety services, restoring interrupted utility and other essential services, reestablishing transportation routes, and providing food and shelter for those displaced by the incident. Although called "short term," some of these activities may last for weeks.
- **Long-term recovery**, which is outside the scope of the *Framework*, may involve some of the same actions but may continue for a number of months or years, depending on the severity and extent of the damage sustained. For example, long-term recovery may include the complete redevelopment of damaged areas.<sup>38</sup>

**Recovery from an incident is unique to each community and depends on the amount and kind of damage caused by the incident and the resources that the jurisdiction has ready or can quickly obtain.** In the short term, recovery is an extension of the response phase in which basic services and functions are restored. In the long term, recovery is a restoration of both the personal lives of individuals and the livelihood of the community. Recovery can include the development, coordination, and execution of service- and site-restoration plans; reconstitution of government operations and services; programs to provide housing and promote restoration; long-term care and treatment of affected persons; and additional measures for social, political, environmental, and economic restoration. Recovery programs:

- Identify needs and resources.
- Provide accessible housing and promote restoration.

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<sup>38</sup> Additional information on long-term recovery can be found in the ESF #14 Annex at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

## CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

- Address care and treatment of affected persons.
- Inform residents and prevent unrealistic expectations.
- Implement additional measures for community restoration.
- Incorporate mitigation measures and techniques, as feasible.

**Recovery Coordination. The JFO remains the central coordination point among local, tribal, State, and Federal governments, as well as private-sector and nongovernmental entities that are providing recovery assistance.** Examples of Federal and State recovery actions include:

- ***Coordinating assistance programs to help individuals, households, and businesses meet basic needs and return to self-sufficiency.*** Such programs include housing assistance, other needs assistance, crisis counseling services, disaster legal services, and unemployment or reemployment programs. Other activities include coordinating with local and tribal governments the need for and locations of Disaster Recovery Centers.
- ***Establishing Disaster Recovery Centers.*** Federal, State, tribal, local, voluntary, and nongovernmental organizations determine the need for and location of Disaster Recovery Centers. Staff provide recovery and mitigation program information, advice, counseling, and related technical assistance.
- ***Coordinating with private-sector and nongovernmental organizations involved in donations management and other recovery activities.***
- ***Coordinating public assistance grant programs authorized by the Stafford Act.*** These programs aid local, tribal, and State governments and eligible private nonprofit organizations with the cost of emergency protective services, debris removal, and the repair or replacement of disaster-damaged public facilities and associated environmental restoration.
- ***Coordinating with the private sector on restoration and recovery of CIKR.*** Activities include working with owners/operators to ensure the restoration of critical services, including water, power, natural gas and petroleum, emergency communications, and healthcare.
- ***Coordinating mitigation grant programs to help communities reduce the potential impacts of future disasters.*** Activities include developing strategies to rebuild resilient communities.

After the JFO closes, ongoing activities transition to individual agencies with primary recovery responsibilities. Federal partners then work directly with their regional or headquarters offices to administer and monitor recovery programs, support, and technical services.

## CHAPTER III

# RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

**This chapter explains how we as a Nation are organized to implement response actions. It describes the organizational structures that have been developed, tested, and refined over time and how these structures are applied at all levels to support an effective response.** The key staff positions needed to operate this system are explained and their relationships and dependencies outlined. The *Framework's* response structures are based on the *National Incident Management System (NIMS)*, particularly on its Incident Command System (ICS).

### INTRODUCTION

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Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 5 called for a single, comprehensive system to enhance the ability of the United States to manage domestic incidents. *NIMS* provides a consistent nationwide template to enable all levels of government, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to work together during an incident.<sup>39</sup>

Integrating these *NIMS* principles into all phases of an incident and throughout all levels of government ensures that all stakeholders have a common set of principles from which to operate during an incident.

**Scope of the *Framework*.** The *Framework* provides structures for implementing national-level policy and operational coordination for domestic response. It can be partially or fully implemented in the context of a threat, in anticipation of a significant event, or in response to an incident. Selective implementation allows for a scaled response, delivery of the exact resources needed, and a level of coordination appropriate to each event.

The *Framework* incorporates organizational structures that promote on-scene initiative, innovation, and sharing of essential resources drawn from all levels of government and the private sector. It is not always obvious whether a seemingly minor incident might be the initial phase of a larger, rapidly growing threat. Response must be quickly scalable, flexible, and adaptable.

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<sup>39</sup> The *NIMS* is available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

## KEY CONCEPTS

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*NIMS* provides a core set of common concepts, principles, terminology, and technologies in the following areas:

- **Incident Command System (ICS).** Much of *NIMS* is built upon ICS, which was developed by the Federal, State, and local wildland fire agencies during the 1970s. ICS is normally structured to facilitate activities in five major functional areas: command, operations, planning, logistics, and finance/administration. In some circumstances, intelligence and investigations may be added as a sixth functional area.
- **Multiagency Coordination System (MACS).** The primary function of MACS is to coordinate activities above the field level and to prioritize the incident demands for critical or competing resources, thereby assisting the coordination of the operations in the field. MACS consists of a combination of elements: personnel, procedures, protocols, business practices, and communications integrated into a common system. For the purpose of coordinating resources and support between multiple jurisdictions, MACS can be implemented from a fixed facility or by other arrangements outlined within the system. Examples of multiagency coordination include a State or county emergency operations center, a State intelligence fusion center, the National Operations Center, the Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Response Coordination Center, the Department of Justice/Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Strategic Information and Operations Center, the FBI Joint Operations Center, and the National Counterterrorism Center.
- **Unified Command.** Unified command is an important element in multijurisdictional or multiagency incident management. It provides guidelines to enable agencies with different legal, geographic, and functional responsibilities to coordinate, plan, and interact effectively. As a team effort, unified command allows all agencies with jurisdictional authority or functional responsibility for the incident to jointly provide management direction to an incident through a common set of incident objectives and strategies and a single Incident Action Plan. Each participating agency maintains its authority, responsibility, and accountability.
- **Training.** Leaders and staff require initial training on response principles, as well as ongoing training to provide updates on current concepts and procedures.
- **Identification and Management of Resources.** Classifying types of resources is essential to ensure that multiple agencies can effectively communicate and provide resources during a crisis, including implementing a plan to inventory, mobilize, and track resources prior to, during, and after an incident.
- **Mutual Aid and Assistance.** Executing mutual aid and other agreements established prior to an incident with appropriate entities at the local, tribal, State, and Federal levels is an important element of preparedness, along with the readiness to develop/implement new agreements during the life cycle of an incident.
- **Situational Awareness.** Situational awareness is the ability to identify, process, and comprehend the critical information about an incident. More simply, it is knowing what is going on around you. Situational awareness requires continuous

## CHAPTER III: RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

monitoring of relevant sources of information regarding actual incidents and developing hazards.

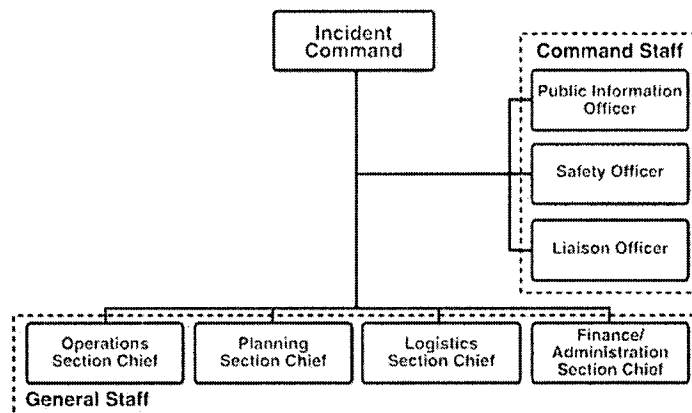
- **Qualifications and Certification.** Competent staff is a requirement for any leader managing an incident. During a crisis there will not be time to determine staff qualifications, if such information has not yet been compiled and available for review by leaders. To identify the appropriate staff to support a leader during a crisis, qualifications based on training and expertise of staff should be identified and evidenced by certification, if appropriate.
- **Collection, Tracking, and Reporting of Incident Information.** Information today is transmitted instantly via the Internet and the 24/7 news channels. While timely information is valuable, it also can be overwhelming. For an effective response, expertise and experience must be leveraged to support decisionmaking and to summarize and prioritize information rapidly. Information must be gathered accurately at the scene and effectively communicated to those who need it. To be successful, clear lines of information flow and a common operating picture are essential.
- **Crisis Action Planning.** Deliberative planning during nonincident periods should quickly transition to crisis action planning when an incident occurs. Crisis action planning is the process for rapidly adapting existing deliberative plans and procedures during an incident based on the actual circumstances of an event. Crisis action planning should also include the provision of decision tools for senior leaders to guide their decisionmaking.
- **Exercises.** Consistent with the National Exercise Program, all stakeholders should regularly exercise their incident management and response capabilities and procedures to ensure that they are fully capable of executing their response responsibilities.

## LOCAL RESPONSE: STRUCTURES AND STAFFING

**Field Level: Incident Command.** Local responders use ICS to manage response operations. ICS is a management system designed to enable effective incident management by integrating a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures and communications operating within a common organizational structure.

A basic strength of ICS is that it is already widely adopted. It is used to organize both near-term and long-term field-level operations for a broad spectrum of incidents.

Figure 4. Incident Command Structure



### CHAPTER III: RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

ICS is used by all levels of government – Federal, State, tribal, and local – as well as by many private-sector and nongovernmental organizations. Typically, the incident command is structured to facilitate activities in five major functional areas: command, operations, planning, logistics, and finance/administration.

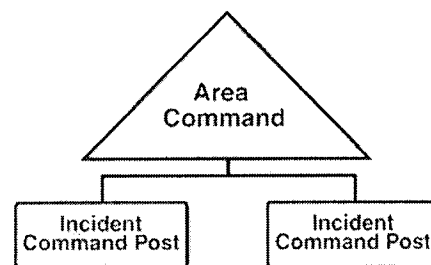
ICS defines certain key roles for managing an ICS incident, as follows:

- The **Incident Commander** is the individual responsible for all response activities, including the development of strategies and tactics and the ordering and release of resources. The Incident Commander has overall authority and responsibility for conducting incident operations and is responsible for the management of all incident operations at the incident site. When multiple command authorities are involved, the incident may be led by a **unified command comprised of officials who have jurisdictional authority or functional responsibility for the incident under an appropriate law, ordinance, or agreement**. The unified command provides direct, on-scene control of tactical operations.
- The **Command Staff** consists of a Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, Liaison Officer, and other positions. The Command Staff reports directly to the Incident Commander. The **General Staff** normally consists of an Operations Section Chief, Planning Section Chief, Logistics Section Chief, and Finance/Administration Section Chief. An Intelligence/Investigations Section may be established, if required, to meet response needs.

At the tactical level, on-scene incident command and management organization are located at an **Incident Command Post**, which is typically comprised of local and mutual aid responders.

**Field Level: Area Command.** If necessary, an **Area Command** may be established to assist the agency administrator/executive in providing oversight for the management of multiple incidents being handled by separate Incident Command Posts or to oversee management of a complex incident dispersed over a larger area and broker critical resources. The Area Command does not have operational responsibilities and is activated only if necessary, depending on the complexity of the incident and incident management span-of-control considerations. The Area Command or Incident Command Post provides information to, and may request assistance from, the local emergency operations center.

Figure 5. Area Command Structure



**Local Emergency Operations Center (EOC).** If the Incident Commander determines that additional resources or capabilities are needed, he or she will contact the **local EOC** and relay requirements to the local emergency manager.

Local EOCs are the physical locations where multiagency coordination occurs. EOCs help form a **common operating picture** of the incident, relieve on-scene command of the burden of external coordination, and secure additional resources. The core functions of an EOC include coordination, communications, resource allocation and tracking, and information collection, analysis, and dissemination.

### CHAPTER III: RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

EOCs may be permanent organizations and facilities that are staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, or they may be established to meet short-term needs. Standing EOCs (or those activated to support larger, more complex incidents) are typically established in a central or permanently established facility. Such permanent facilities in larger communities are typically directed by a full-time **emergency manager**. EOCs may be organized by major discipline (fire, law enforcement, medical services, etc.), by jurisdiction (city, county, region, etc.), by Emergency Support Function (communications, public works, engineering, transportation, resource support, etc.) or, more likely, by some combination thereof.

During an incident, the local emergency manager ensures the EOC is staffed to support the incident command and arranges needed resources. The **chief elected or appointed official** provides policy direction and supports the Incident Commander and emergency manager, as needed.

EOCs at all levels of government often encourage and accommodate private-sector participation. The private sector, in turn, can maintain parallel structures to respond to the needs of the EOC. This representation should complement, not replace, presence in the EOC granted currently to public utilities.

## STATE RESPONSE: STRUCTURES AND STAFFING

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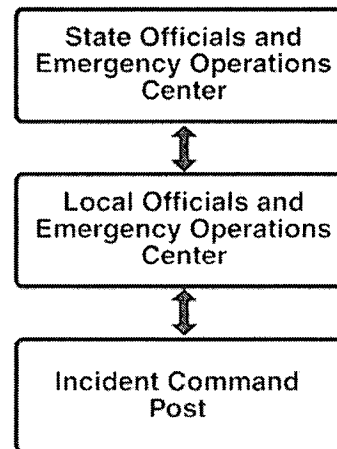
**State Emergency Operations Center (EOC).** State EOCs are the physical location where multiagency coordination occurs. Every State maintains an EOC configured to expand as necessary to manage events requiring State-level assistance.

The local incident command structure directs on-scene emergency management activities and maintains command and control of on-scene incident operations. State EOCs are activated as necessary to support local EOCs. Therefore, the State EOC is the central location from which off-scene activities supported by the State are coordinated. Chief elected and appointed officials are located at the State EOC, as well as personnel supporting core functions. The key function of State EOC personnel is to ensure that those who are located at the scene have the resources (e.g., personnel, tools, and equipment) they need for the response.

State and tribal officials typically take the lead to communicate public information regarding incidents occurring in their jurisdictions. It is essential that immediately following the onset of an incident, the State or tribal government, in collaboration with local officials, ensures that:

- Communication lines with the press are open, questions receive prompt responses, and false rumors are refuted before they spread.
- Information about where to receive help is communicated directly to victims and victims' families.

**Figure 6. State and Emergency Operations Center**





### CHAPTER III: RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

In order to coordinate the release of emergency information and other public affairs functions, a **Joint Information Center (JIC)** may be established. The JIC serves as a focal point for coordinated and timely release of incident-related information to the public and the media. Information about where to receive assistance is communicated directly to victims and their families in an accessible format and in appropriate languages for those with limited English proficiency.

**Requesting and Managing Federal Assistance.** The Governor is responsible for requesting Federal assistance for incidents within his or her State. Overall, Federal incident support to the State is generally coordinated through a **Joint Field Office (JFO)**. The JFO provides the means to integrate diverse Federal resources and engage directly with the State. Using unified command principles, a **Unified Coordination Group** comprised of senior officials from the State and key Federal departments and agencies is established at the JFO. This group of senior officials provides the breadth of national support to achieve shared objectives.

Details of the structures and staffing models associated with a JFO, the FEMA Regional Response Coordination Centers (RRCCs), and other organizations that support State response are described below, in the section regarding Federal response structures. By way of introduction, the *Framework* recognizes two senior leaders appointed by the Governor to work in coordination with the Federal JFO team.

**State Coordinating Officer (SCO).** The SCO plays a critical role in managing the State response and recovery operations following Stafford Act declarations. The Governor of the affected State appoints the SCO, and lines of authority flow from the Governor to the SCO, following the State's policies and laws. For certain anticipated events in which a Stafford Act declaration is expected, such as an approaching hurricane, the Secretary of Homeland Security or the FEMA Administrator may pre-designate one or more Federal officials to coordinate with the SCO to determine resources and actions that will likely be required, and begin deployment of assets. The specific roles and responsibilities of the SCO include:

- Serving as the primary representative of the Governor for the affected State or locality with the RRCC or within the JFO once it is established.
- Working with the Federal Coordinating Officer to formulate State requirements, including those that are beyond State capability, and set priorities for employment of Federal resources provided to the State.
- Ensuring coordination of resources provided to the State via mutual aid and assistance compacts.
- Providing a linkage to local government.
- Serving in the Unified Coordination Group in the JFO.

**Governor's Authorized Representative.** As the complexity of the response dictates, the *Framework* recognizes that the Governor may empower a Governor's Authorized Representative to:

- Execute all necessary documents for disaster assistance on behalf of the State, including certification of applications for public assistance.

## CHAPTER III: RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

- Represent the Governor of the impacted State in the Unified Coordination Group, when required.
- Coordinate and supervise the State disaster assistance program to include serving as its grant administrator.
- Identify, in coordination with the SCO, the State's critical information needs for incorporation into a list of Essential Elements of Information (critical items of specific information required to plan and execute an operation and to support timely, logical decisions).

**U.S. Territories.** Within the *Framework*, U.S. territories use the same incident management and response structures and mechanisms as State governments for requesting and receiving Federal assistance. Territories pose special response challenges. Working in partnership with territorial governments, the *Framework* is adapted to meet these geographic challenges through preparedness plans and pre-staging of assets.

Territorial governments may receive federally coordinated response within the U.S. possessions, including the insular areas, and within the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.<sup>40</sup> Stafford Act assistance is available to Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, which are included in the definition of "State" in the Stafford Act. Stafford Act assistance also is available to the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands under the Compact of Free Association.

## FEDERAL RESPONSE: STRUCTURES AND STAFFING

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### POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATIONS COORDINATION

**Policy Development.** The President leads the Nation in responding effectively and ensuring the necessary coordinating structure, leadership, and resources are applied quickly and efficiently to large-scale incidents. The Homeland Security Council (HSC) and National Security Council (NSC) advise the President on national strategic and policy during large-scale incidents. The HSC and NSC ensure coordination for all homeland and national security-related activities among executive departments and agencies and promote effective development and implementation of related policy. The HSC and NSC ensure unified leadership across the Federal Government.

The Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism and the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs coordinate interagency policy for domestic and international incident management, respectively, and convene interagency meetings to coordinate policy issues. Both Councils use well-established policy development structures to identify issues that require interagency coordination.

To support domestic interagency policy coordination on a routine basis, HSC and NSC deputies and principals convene to resolve significant policy issues. They are supported by the following two Policy Coordination Committees at the assistant secretary level:

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<sup>40</sup> Refer to footnote 5 for more information on U.S. possessions and freely associated states.

### CHAPTER III: RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

- **Domestic Readiness Group (DRG).** The DRG is an interagency body convened on a regular basis to develop and coordinate preparedness, response, and incident management policy. This group evaluates various policy issues of interagency importance regarding domestic preparedness and incident management and makes recommendations to senior levels of the policymaking structure for decision. During an incident, the DRG may be convened by DHS to evaluate relevant interagency policy issues regarding response and develop recommendations as may be required.
- **Counterterrorism Security Group (CSG).** The CSG is an interagency body convened on a regular basis to develop terrorism prevention policy and to coordinate threat response and law enforcement investigations associated with terrorism. This group evaluates various policy issues of interagency importance regarding counterterrorism and makes recommendations to senior levels of the policymaking structure for decision.

**Within the structure described above, Federal departments and agencies support policy development based on responsibilities assigned by statute, by HSPD-5, and in specific detail in Chapter I of this document.**

**Operations Coordination.** The **Secretary of Homeland Security** is the principal Federal official responsible for domestic incident management. This includes coordinating **Federal operations** and resource deployments within the United States to prepare for, respond to, and recover from terrorist attacks, major disasters, or other emergencies.<sup>41</sup>

All Federal departments and agencies may play significant roles in incident management and response activities, depending on the nature and size of an event. The policies, operational structures, and capabilities to support an integrated Federal response have grown swiftly since the 9/11 attacks, and continue to evolve. Many of these arrangements are defined in the Emergency Support Functions, coordinated through pre-scripted mission assignments, and formalized in interagency agreements.

**Communications among Federal departments and agencies, particularly in an era when the Nation is at war with terrorists, requires a highly integrated capacity to share information efficiently and effectively.** By doing so, responders can effectively manage incidents that start small but may have large consequences, such as a deliberate attack on the food supply that might initially appear localized or even commonplace. At the same time, these *Framework* mechanisms do not interfere with the established operations of local, tribal, State, and Federal agencies.

**The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was created in 2003 in part to serve as the planning integrator for the President of a more robust Federal incident management capability and to coordinate Federal incident management activities in support of our State and local partners.** DHS is responsible for the overall architecture of how these capabilities are executed and sustained. The Department has considerable responsibilities and resources for emergency response, and also relies on the statutory authorities, subject-matter expertise, and range of assets and operational capabilities of other Federal departments and agencies.

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<sup>41</sup> Per HSPD-5, paragraph 8, the Secretary of Homeland Security's operational coordination role excludes law enforcement coordination activities assigned to the Attorney General and generally delegated to the Director of the FBI.

## CHAPTER III: RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

The **FEMA Administrator** is the principal advisor to the President, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Homeland Security Council regarding emergency management. The FEMA Administrator's duties include operation of the National Response Coordination Center, the effective support of all Emergency Support Functions, and, more generally, preparation for, protection against, response to, and recovery from all-hazards incidents. Reporting to the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Administrator also is responsible for management of the core DHS grant programs supporting homeland security.<sup>42</sup>

**Other DHS agency heads** have a lead response role or an otherwise significant role, depending upon the type and severity of the event. For example, the U.S. Coast Guard Commandant has statutory lead authority for certain mass migration management scenarios and significant oil/hazardous substance spill incidents in the maritime environment.

The **DHS Director of Operations Coordination** is the Secretary's principal advisor for the overall departmental level of integration of incident management operations and oversees the National Operations Center. Run by the Director, the National Operations Center is intended to provide a one-stop information source for incident information sharing with the White House and other Federal departments and agencies at the headquarters level.

**The role of DHS in coordinating Federal response operations must be highly collaborative.** There must be excellent, mutual transparency among DHS and its Federal partners into each other's response capabilities. The same is true with regard to States. This requires extraordinarily close, daily **operational connectivity** among States, DHS, and other departments and agencies at senior levels and at operational levels.

### HEADQUARTERS-LEVEL SUPPORT STRUCTURES

**National Operations Center (NOC).** The NOC is the primary national hub for situational awareness and operations coordination across the Federal Government for incident management. It provides the Secretary of Homeland Security and other principals with information necessary to make critical national-level incident management decisions.

The NOC is a continuously operating multiagency operations center. The NOC's staff monitors many sources of threat and hazard information from across the United States and abroad. It is supported by a 24/7 watch officer contingent, including: (1) NOC managers; (2) selected Federal interagency, State, and local law enforcement representatives; (3) intelligence community liaison officers provided by the DHS Chief Intelligence Officer; (4) analysts from the Operations Division's interagency planning element; and (5) watch standers representing dozens of organizations and disciplines from the Federal Government and others from the private sector.

The NOC facilitates homeland security information sharing and operations coordination with other Federal, State, tribal, local, and nongovernmental partners. During a response to a significant incident, the NOC meets its information-fusion and information-sharing responsibilities by providing spot reports, situation reports, and other information-sharing tools, all supported by and distributed through its common operating picture. The continued development and rapid integration at the Federal, State, tribal, and local levels of

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<sup>42</sup> See the Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act, enacted as part of the FY 2007 DHS Appropriations Act, P.L. 109-295.

### CHAPTER III: RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

electronic reporting and information-sharing tools supporting the NOC's common operating picture is a very high priority of the *Framework*.

**NOC Operational Components.** The following components of the NOC provide integrated mission support:

- **National Response Coordination Center (NRCC).** The NRCC is FEMA's primary operations management center, as well as the focal point for national resource coordination. As a 24/7 operations center, the NRCC monitors potential or developing incidents and supports the efforts of regional and field components.

The NRCC also has the capacity to increase staffing immediately in anticipation of or in response to an incident by activating the full range of ESFs and other personnel as needed to provide resources and policy guidance to a JFO or other local incident management structures. The NRCC provides overall emergency management coordination, conducts operational planning, deploys national-level entities, and collects and disseminates incident information as it builds and maintains a common operating picture. Representatives of nonprofit organizations within the private sector may participate in the NRCC to enhance information exchange and cooperation between these entities and the Federal Government.

- **National Infrastructure Coordinating Center (NICC).** The NICC monitors the Nation's critical infrastructure and key resources on an ongoing basis. During an incident, the NICC provides a coordinating forum to share information across infrastructure and key resources sectors through appropriate information-sharing entities such as the Information Sharing and Analysis Centers and the Sector Coordinating Councils.<sup>43</sup>

**Supporting Federal Operations Centers.** The Federal Government has a wide range of headquarters-level operations centers that maintain situational awareness within their functional areas and provide relevant information to the NOC. Most Cabinet departments and agencies have at least one such facility. Below are examples of other Federal operations centers that have key roles in providing situational awareness and interagency coordination during incidents.

- **National Military Command Center (NMCC).** The NMCC is the Nation's focal point for continuous monitoring and coordination of worldwide military operations. It directly supports combatant commanders, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, and the President in the command of U.S. Armed Forces in peacetime contingencies and war. Structured to support the President and Secretary of Defense effectively and efficiently, the Center participates in a wide variety of activities, ranging from missile warning and attack assessment to management of peacetime contingencies such as Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) activities. In conjunction with monitoring the current worldwide situation, the Center alerts the Joint Staff and other national agencies to developing crises and will initially coordinate any military response required.

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<sup>43</sup> See <http://www.fema.gov/NRF> for additional information.

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- **National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC).** The NCTC serves as the primary Federal organization for integrating and analyzing all intelligence pertaining to terrorism and counterterrorism and for conducting strategic operational planning by integrating all instruments of national power.
- **Strategic Information and Operations Center (SIOC).** The FBI SIOC is the focal point and operational control center for all Federal intelligence, law enforcement, and investigative law enforcement activities related to domestic terrorist incidents or credible threats, including leading attribution investigations. The SIOC serves as an information clearinghouse to help collect, process, vet, and disseminate information relevant to law enforcement and criminal investigation efforts in a timely manner. The SIOC maintains direct connectivity with the NOC. The SIOC, located at FBI Headquarters, supports the FBI's mission in leading efforts of the law enforcement community to detect, prevent, preempt, and disrupt terrorist attacks against the United States.

The SIOC maintains liaison with the National Joint Terrorism Task Force (NJTTF). The mission of the NJTTF is to enhance communications, coordination, and cooperation among Federal, State, tribal, and local agencies representing the intelligence, law enforcement, defense, diplomatic, public safety, and homeland security communities by providing a point of fusion for terrorism intelligence and by supporting Joint Terrorism Task Forces throughout the United States.

- **Other DHS Operations Centers.** Depending upon the type of incident (e.g., National Special Security Events), the operations centers of other DHS operating Components may serve as the primary operations management center in support of the Secretary. These are the U.S. Coast Guard, Transportation Security Administration, U.S. Secret Service, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection operations centers.

**Emergency Support Functions (ESFs). FEMA coordinates response support from across the Federal Government and certain NGOs by calling up, as needed, one or more of the 15 ESFs.** The ESFs are coordinated by FEMA through its NRCC. During a response, ESFs are a critical mechanism to coordinate functional capabilities and resources provided by Federal departments and agencies, along with certain private-sector and nongovernmental organizations. They represent an effective way to bundle and funnel resources and capabilities to local, tribal, State, and other responders. These functions are coordinated by a single agency but may rely on several agencies that provide resources for each functional area. The mission of the ESFs is to provide the greatest possible access to capabilities of the Federal Government regardless of which agency has those capabilities.

The ESFs serve as the primary operational-level mechanism to provide assistance in functional areas such as transportation, communications, public works and engineering, firefighting, mass care, housing, human services, public health and medical services, search and rescue, agriculture and natural resources, and energy. A list of the 15 ESFs and a description of the scope of each is found in Table 2.

**Table 2. Emergency Support Functions and ESF Coordinators**

<p><b>ESF #1 – Transportation</b>  <b>ESF Coordinator: Department of Transportation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aviation/airspace management and control</li> <li>• Transportation safety</li> <li>• Restoration and recovery of transportation infrastructure</li> <li>• Movement restrictions</li> <li>• Damage and impact assessment</li> </ul>
<p><b>ESF #2 – Communications</b>  <b>ESF Coordinator: DHS (National Communications System)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination with telecommunications and information technology industries</li> <li>• Restoration and repair of telecommunications infrastructure</li> <li>• Protection, restoration, and sustainment of national cyber and information technology resources</li> <li>• Oversight of communications within the Federal incident management and response structures</li> </ul>
<p><b>ESF #3 – Public Works and Engineering</b>  <b>ESF Coordinator: Department of Defense (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure protection and emergency repair</li> <li>• Infrastructure restoration</li> <li>• Engineering services and construction management</li> <li>• Emergency contracting support for life-saving and life-sustaining services</li> </ul>
<p><b>ESF #4 – Firefighting</b>  <b>ESF Coordinator: Department of Agriculture (U.S. Forest Service)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination of Federal firefighting activities</li> <li>• Support to wildland, rural, and urban firefighting operations</li> </ul>
<p><b>ESF #5 – Emergency Management</b>  <b>ESF Coordinator: DHS (FEMA)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination of incident management and response efforts</li> <li>• Issuance of mission assignments</li> <li>• Resource and human capital</li> <li>• Incident action planning</li> <li>• Financial management</li> </ul>
<p><b>ESF #6 – Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services</b>  <b>ESF Coordinator: DHS (FEMA)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mass care</li> <li>• Emergency assistance</li> <li>• Disaster housing</li> <li>• Human services</li> </ul>
<p><b>ESF #7 – Logistics Management and Resource Support</b>  <b>ESF Coordinator: General Services Administration and DHS (FEMA)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive, national incident logistics planning, management, and sustainment capability</li> <li>• Resource support (facility space, office equipment and supplies, contracting services, etc.)</li> </ul>

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<p><b>ESF #8 – Public Health and Medical Services</b>  <b>ESF Coordinator: Department of Health and Human Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public health</li> <li>• Medical</li> <li>• Mental health services</li> <li>• Mass fatality management</li> </ul>
<p><b>ESF #9 – Search and Rescue</b>  <b>ESF Coordinator: DHS (FEMA)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life-saving assistance</li> <li>• Search and rescue operations</li> </ul>
<p><b>ESF #10 – Oil and Hazardous Materials Response</b>  <b>ESF Coordinator: Environmental Protection Agency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oil and hazardous materials (chemical, biological, radiological, etc.) response</li> <li>• Environmental short- and long-term cleanup</li> </ul>
<p><b>ESF #11 – Agriculture and Natural Resources</b>  <b>ESF Coordinator: Department of Agriculture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nutrition assistance</li> <li>• Animal and plant disease and pest response</li> <li>• Food safety and security</li> <li>• Natural and cultural resources and historic properties protection</li> <li>• Safety and well-being of household pets</li> </ul>
<p><b>ESF #12 – Energy</b>  <b>ESF Coordinator: Department of Energy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy infrastructure assessment, repair, and restoration</li> <li>• Energy industry utilities coordination</li> <li>• Energy forecast</li> </ul>
<p><b>ESF #13 – Public Safety and Security</b>  <b>ESF Coordinator: Department of Justice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facility and resource security</li> <li>• Security planning and technical resource assistance</li> <li>• Public safety and security support</li> <li>• Support to access, traffic, and crowd control</li> </ul>
<p><b>ESF #14 – Long-Term Community Recovery</b>  <b>ESF Coordinator: DHS (FEMA)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social and economic community impact assessment</li> <li>• Long-term community recovery assistance to States, tribes, local governments, and the private sector</li> <li>• Analysis and review of mitigation program implementation</li> </ul>
<p><b>ESF #15 – External Affairs</b>  <b>ESF Coordinator: DHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency public information and protective action guidance</li> <li>• Media and community relations</li> <li>• Congressional and international affairs</li> <li>• Tribal and insular affairs</li> </ul>



### CHAPTER III: RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

Each ESF is comprised of a coordinator and primary and support agencies. The *Framework* identifies primary agencies on the basis of authorities, resources, and capabilities. Support agencies are assigned based on resources and capabilities in a given functional area. The resources provided by the ESFs are consistent with resource-typing categories identified in the *NIMS*.

ESFs may be selectively activated for both Stafford Act and non-Stafford Act incidents under circumstances as defined in HSPD-5. Not all incidents requiring Federal support result in the activation of ESFs. FEMA can deploy assets and capabilities through ESFs into an area in anticipation of an approaching storm or event that is expected to cause a significant impact and result. This coordination through ESFs allows FEMA to position Federal support for a quick response, though actual assistance cannot normally be provided until the Governor requests and receives a Presidential major disaster or emergency declaration. Many States have also organized an ESF structure along this approach.

**When ESFs are activated, they may have a headquarters, regional, and field presence.** At FEMA headquarters, the ESFs support decisionmaking and coordination of field operations within the NRCC. The ESFs deliver a broad range of technical support and other services at the regional level in the Regional Response Coordination Centers, and in the Joint Field Office and Incident Command Posts, as required by the incident. At all levels, FEMA issues mission assignments to obtain resources and capabilities from across the ESFs in support of the State.<sup>44</sup>

The ESFs plan and support response activities. At the headquarters, regional, and field levels, ESFs provide staff to support the incident command sections for operations, planning, logistics, and finance/administration, as requested. The incident command structure enables the ESFs to work collaboratively. For example, if a State requests assistance with a mass evacuation, the JFO would request personnel from ESF #1 (*Transportation*), ESF #6 (*Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services*), and ESF #8 (*Public Health and Medical Services*). These would then be integrated into a single branch or group within the Operations Section to ensure effective coordination of evacuation services. The same structures are used to organize ESF response at the field, regional, and headquarters levels.

To support an effective response, all ESFs are required to have both strategic and more-detailed operational plans that include all participating organizations and engage the private sector and NGOs as appropriate. The ongoing support, coordination, and integration of ESFs and their work are core responsibilities of FEMA in its response leadership role for DHS.

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<sup>44</sup> Additional information on the mission assignment process is contained in the Financial Management Support Annex, which is available via the **NRF Resource Center** at <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

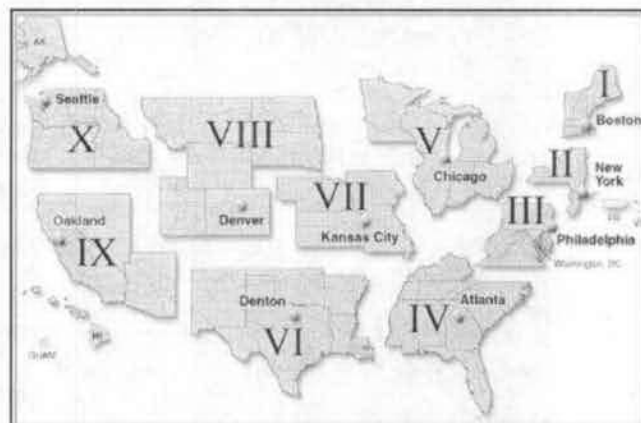
**Support and Incident Annexes. Other mechanisms by which support is harnessed among Federal, private-sector, and NGO partners are the Support and Incident Annexes.** By serving as coordinating or cooperating agencies for various Support or Incident Annexes, Federal departments and agencies conduct a variety of activities to include managing specific functions and missions or providing overarching Federal support within their functional areas. Specifics on these positions are provided in the Introductions to the Support and Incident Annexes at the **NRF Resource Center**.

## REGIONAL SUPPORT STRUCTURE

**FEMA Regional Offices.** FEMA has 10 regional offices, each headed by a Regional Administrator. The regional field structures are FEMA's permanent presence for communities and States across the Nation. The staff at these offices support development of all-hazards operational plans and generally help States and communities become better prepared. These regional offices mobilize Federal assets and evaluation teams to work with State and local agencies. Many of FEMA's most experienced response personnel are employed at regional offices.

Each of FEMA's regional offices maintains a **Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC)**. The RRCCs are 24/7 coordination centers that expand to become an interagency facility staffed by ESFs in anticipation of a serious incident in the region or immediately following an incident. Operating under the direction of the FEMA Regional Administrator, the RRCCs coordinate Federal regional response efforts, and maintain connectivity with State EOCs, State fusion centers, Federal Executive Boards, and other Federal and State operations and coordination centers that have potential to contribute to development of situational awareness. Ongoing RRCC operations transition to a JFO once it is established, so that the RRCC can remain ready to deal with new incidents.

Figure 7. FEMA Regions



Other Federal departments and agencies have regional or field offices that may participate with State, tribal, and local governments in planning for incidents under their jurisdiction and provide initial response assets to the incident.

## FIELD SUPPORT STRUCTURE

**Initial Response. Depending upon the type and scope of incident, in coordination with State and local agencies, Federal assets may be dispatched during the first hours following an incident.** Of course, in some cases, the proximity of Federal response employees already working in a community may be able to deliver Federal support that ranges from experienced and professional emergency management teams to other temporary and *ad hoc* assistance.

### CHAPTER III: RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

Following a Presidential disaster declaration, a wide array of Federal assets can be deployed as needed. For example, FEMA may deploy **Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMATs)**, which are interagency, regionally based response teams that provide a forward Federal presence to improve response to serious incidents.

The IMATs support efforts to meet the emergent needs of State and local jurisdictions, possess the capability to provide initial situational awareness for Federal decisionmakers, and support the establishment of Federal coordination efforts with the State.

Other initial response and coordination tools deployed by FEMA in conjunction with declared emergencies and disasters include:

- **Hurricane Liaison Team (HLT).** The HLT is a small team designed to enhance hurricane disaster response by facilitating information exchange between the National Hurricane Center in Miami and other National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration components, as well as Federal, State, tribal, and local government officials.
- **Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Task Forces.** The National US&R Response System is a framework for structuring local emergency services personnel into integrated response task forces. The 28 National US&R Task Forces, complete with the necessary tools, equipment, skills, and techniques, can be deployed by FEMA to assist State, tribal, and local governments in rescuing victims of structural collapse incidents or to assist in other search and rescue missions. Each task force must have all its personnel and equipment at the embarkation point within 6 hours of activation. The task force can be dispatched and en route to its destination within a matter of hours.
- **Mobile Emergency Response Support (MERS).** The primary function of MERS is to provide mobile telecommunications capabilities and life, logistics, operational, and power-generation support required for the on-site management of response activities. MERS support falls into three broad categories: (1) operational support elements, (2) communications equipment and operators, and (3) logistics support.

MERS supports Federal, State, tribal, and local responders in their efforts to save lives, protect property, and coordinate response operations. Staged in six strategic locations, one with offshore capabilities, the MERS detachments can concurrently support multiple field operating sites within an incident area.

**Joint Field Office (JFO).** The JFO is the primary Federal incident management field structure. The JFO is a temporary Federal facility that provides a central location for the coordination of Federal, State, tribal, and local governments and private-sector and nongovernmental organizations with primary responsibility for response and recovery. The JFO structure is organized, staffed, and managed in a manner consistent with *NIMS* principles and is led by the Unified Coordination Group. Although the JFO uses an ICS structure, the JFO does not manage on-scene operations. Instead, the JFO focuses on providing support to on-scene efforts and conducting broader support operations that may extend beyond the incident site.

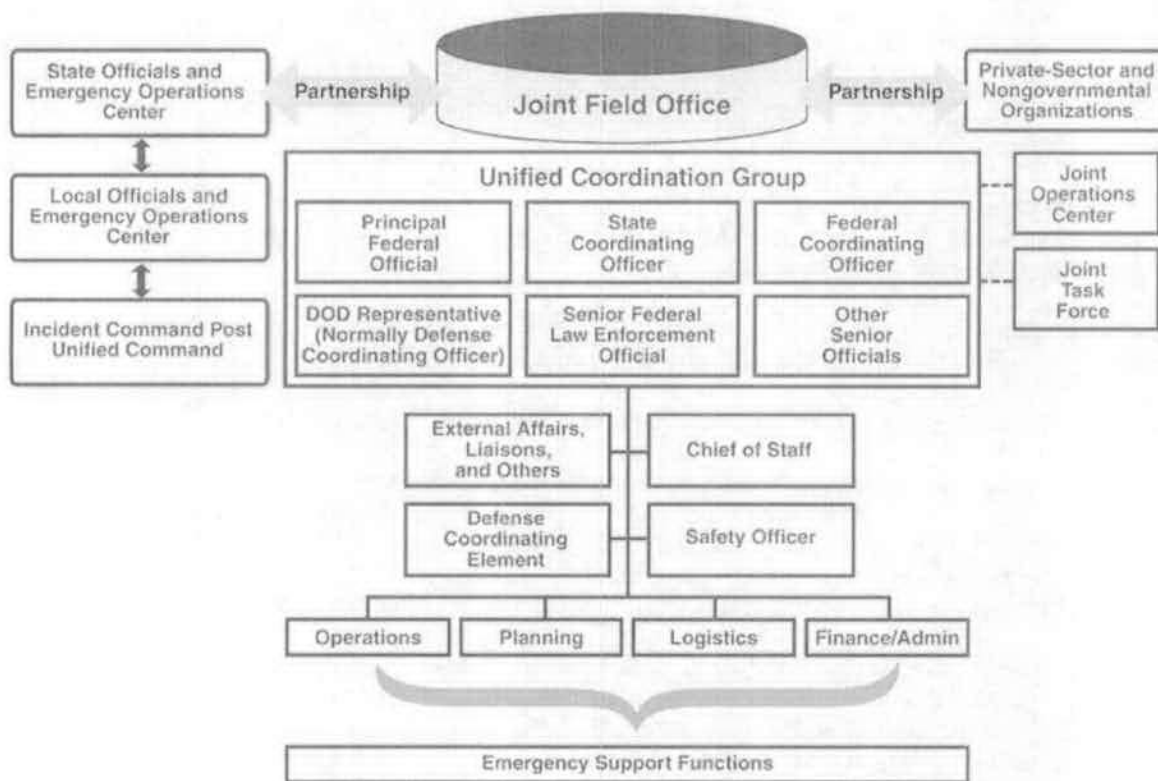
**Personnel from Federal and State departments and agencies, other jurisdictional entities, the private sector, and NGOs may be requested to staff various levels of the JFO, depending on the requirements of the incident.** When incidents impact the entire Nation or multiple States or localities, multiple JFOs may be established. In these

situations, coordination will occur following the principles of Unified Area Command. The physical location of such a coordination entity depends on the situation.

As the primary field structure, the JFO provides the organizing structure to integrate diverse Federal authorities and capabilities and coordinate Federal response and recovery operations. For additional information on staffing and procedures, see the JFO Standard Operating Procedure.<sup>45</sup> The JFO is internally organized and operated using the concepts and principles of the *NIMS*.

The figure below represents an overview of the JFO and its key components.

**Figure 8. Joint Field Office**



<sup>45</sup> This and other Standard Operating Procedures are available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

**Unified Coordination Group.** The JFO is led by the Unified Coordination Group, which is comprised of specified senior leaders representing State and Federal interests, and in certain circumstances tribal governments, local jurisdictions, the private sector, or NGOs. The Unified Coordination Group typically consists of the Principal Federal Official (if designated), Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO), State Coordinating Officer, and senior officials from other entities with primary statutory or jurisdictional responsibility and significant operational responsibility for an aspect of an incident (e.g., the Senior Health Official, Department of Defense representative, or Senior Federal Law Enforcement Official if assigned). Within the Unified Coordination Group, the FCO is the primary Federal official responsible for coordinating, integrating, and synchronizing Federal response activities.

**The composition of the Unified Coordination Group will vary, depending upon the scope and nature of the incident and the assets deployed in support of the affected jurisdiction.**

The JFO structure normally includes a Unified Coordination Staff. The Unified Coordination Group determines the extent of staffing based on the type and magnitude of the incident. See the JFO Standard Operating Procedure for further details on these and other Federal staff positions supporting the field operation.

**Infrastructure Liaison.** The Infrastructure Liaison is assigned by the DHS Office of Infrastructure Protection and advises the Unified Coordination Group on regionally or nationally significant CIKR issues.<sup>46</sup>

**Safety Officer.** The JFO Safety Officer is the senior advisor on all occupational safety and health concerns affecting and arising from the incident.

The JFO is organized into four sections based on the ICS standard organization as follows:

- **Operations Section.** The Operations Section coordinates operational support with on-scene incident management efforts. Branches, divisions, and groups may be added or deleted as required, depending on the nature of the incident. The Operations Section is also responsible for coordinating with other Federal facilities that may be established to support incident management activities.
- **Planning Section.** The Planning Section's functions include the collection, evaluation, dissemination, and use of information regarding the threat or incident and the status of Federal resources. The Planning Section prepares and documents Federal support actions and develops unified action, contingency, long-term, and other plans.
- **Logistics Section.** The Logistics Section coordinates logistics support that includes: control of and accountability for Federal supplies and equipment; resource ordering; delivery of equipment, supplies, and services to the JFO and other field locations; facility location, setup, space management, building services, and general facility operations; transportation coordination and fleet management services; information and technology systems services; administrative services such as mail management and reproduction; and customer assistance.

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<sup>46</sup> For more information see the CIKR Support Annex, available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

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- **Finance and Administration Section.** The Finance and Administration Section is responsible for the financial management, monitoring, and tracking of all Federal costs relating to the incident and the functioning of the JFO while adhering to all Federal laws and regulations.

All or portions of this organizational structure may be activated based on the nature and magnitude of the threat or incident.

Depending on the scope and nature of the incident, the Unified Coordination Group identifies what Federal capabilities are needed and requests Federal staff from these areas to support the JFO structure.

**The JFO is the primary, but not the only, Federal field structure.** Presidential directives<sup>47</sup> and other authorities outline the primary areas of responsibility that guide Federal support at national, regional, and field levels. The field structures are designed to implement these lanes of responsibility and provide coordination to ensure an effective response. In addition to the JFO, these include:

- **Joint Operations Center (JOC).** The JOC is an interagency command post established by the FBI to manage terrorist threats or incidents and investigative and intelligence activities. The JOC coordinates the necessary local, State, and Federal assets required to support the investigation, and to prepare for, respond to, and resolve the threat or incident.<sup>48</sup>
- **Joint Information Center (JIC).** The JIC is responsible for the coordination and dissemination of information for the public and media concerning an incident. JICs may be established locally, regionally, or nationally depending on the size and magnitude of the incident.

The JIC is established at or virtually connected to the JFO, through the ESF #15 – External Affairs staff. JICs may be established at multiple locations if the nature and magnitude of the incident require. Co-location of the Federal, State, tribal, and local JICs is encouraged.

There may be additional field structures. These facilities should be co-located to the extent possible, or otherwise established in close proximity. While these structures may not be physically co-located, they will, when and if established, maintain connectivity to share information and remain aligned in purpose and intent. Each coordination center will normally assign liaisons to each of the other coordination centers to ensure alignment.

### FIELD SUPPORT ROLES

The Federal team that assembles to provide unified coordination is composed of multiple senior leaders performing supporting roles tailored to the specific event. Not all of these will be deployed at every incident that involves a Federal response.

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<sup>47</sup> HSPD-5, "Management of Domestic Incidents"

<sup>48</sup> For detail on the relationship between the JOC and the JFO, see the Terrorism Incident Law Enforcement Annex, available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

### CHAPTER III: RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

Obviously, not all Federal response efforts come with Stafford Act funding and the full array of Stafford Act staffing. However, a Stafford Act incident, such as a large hurricane or earthquake, will generate a very disciplined and scripted deployment. An equally disciplined yet different array of Federal personnel and alternative leadership positions may be deployed for other non-Stafford Act incidents. All necessary staffing options are provided for by the *Framework* and anticipated with its various incident scenario plans.

For example, a mass migration event in the Gulf of Mexico would entail a U.S. Coast Guard response lead. An oil spill for which the Coast Guard has cleanup responsibility under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 does not result in establishment of a JFO, but it employs similar organizational structures under the leadership of the Coast Guard's On-Scene Coordinator.<sup>49</sup> Alternatively, the criminal investigation following a car bomb attack on an airport will be directed by the Attorney General, and would closely involve the Transportation Security Administration from the moment of an explosion to institute appropriate airport security measures, yet may not generate a Stafford Act declaration.

Key senior Federal officials that typically may be deployed with a Federal incident management team include those discussed below.

**Principal Federal Official (PFO).** By law and by Presidential directive, the Secretary of Homeland Security is the principal Federal official responsible for coordination of all domestic incidents requiring multiagency Federal response. **The Secretary may elect to designate a single individual to serve as his or her primary representative** to ensure consistency of Federal support as well as the overall effectiveness of the Federal incident management. When appointed, such an individual serves in the field as the PFO for the incident.

Congress has provided that, notwithstanding the general prohibition on appointing a PFO for Stafford Act incidents, "there may be instances in which FEMA should not be the lead agency in charge of the response, such as a pandemic outbreak or an Olympic event." In such cases, the Secretary may assign a PFO. Congress also recognized that there may be "major non-Stafford Act responses that may include a Stafford Act component." In such cases, also, the Secretary may assign a PFO.

The Secretary will only appoint a PFO for catastrophic or unusually complex incidents that require extraordinary coordination. When appointed, the PFO interfaces with Federal, State, tribal, and local jurisdictional officials regarding the overall Federal incident management strategy and acts as the primary Federal spokesperson for coordinated media and public communications. The PFO serves as a member of the Unified Coordination Group and provides a primary point of contact and situational awareness locally for the Secretary of Homeland Security.

**A PFO is a senior Federal official with proven management experience and strong leadership capabilities. The PFO deploys with a small, highly trained mobile support staff.** Both the PFO and support staff undergo specific training prior to appointment to their respective positions. Once formally designated for an ongoing incident, a PFO relinquishes the conduct of all previous duties to focus exclusively on his or her incident management responsibilities.

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<sup>49</sup> See U.S. Coast Guard *Marine Safety Manual*, available at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/nmc/pubs/msm>.

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**The same individual will *not* serve as the Principal Federal Official and the Federal Coordinating Officer (see below) at the same time for the same incident.** When both positions are assigned, the FCO will have responsibility for administering Stafford Act authorities, as described below. The Secretary is not restricted to DHS officials when selecting a PFO.

**The PFO does not direct or replace the incident command structure established at the incident.** Nor does the PFO have directive authority over a Federal Coordinating Officer, a Senior Federal Law Enforcement Official, a DOD Joint Task Force Commander, or any other Federal or State official. Other Federal incident management officials retain their authorities as defined in existing statutes and directives. Rather, the PFO promotes collaboration and, as possible, resolves any Federal interagency conflict that may arise. The PFO identifies and presents to the Secretary of Homeland Security any policy issues that require resolution.

**Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO).** For Stafford Act incidents (i.e., emergencies or major disasters), upon the recommendation of the FEMA Administrator and the Secretary of Homeland Security, the President appoints an FCO. **The FCO is a senior FEMA official trained, certified, and well experienced in emergency management, and specifically appointed to coordinate Federal support in the response to and recovery from emergencies and major disasters.** The FCO executes Stafford Act authorities, including commitment of FEMA resources and the mission assignment of other Federal departments or agencies. If a major disaster or emergency declaration covers a geographic area that spans all or parts of more than one State, the President may decide to appoint a single FCO for the entire incident, with other individuals as needed serving as Deputy FCOs.

**In all cases, the FCO represents the FEMA Administrator in the field to discharge all FEMA responsibilities for the response and recovery efforts underway.** For Stafford Act events, the FCO is the primary Federal representative with whom the SCO and other State, tribal, and local response officials interface to determine the most urgent needs and set objectives for an effective response in collaboration with the Unified Coordination Group.

In Stafford Act incidents, the FCO is the focal point of coordination within the Unified Coordination Group, ensuring overall integration of Federal emergency management, resource allocation, and seamless integration of Federal activities in support of, and in coordination with, State, tribal, and local requirements.

Some FCOs are given additional, specialized training regarding unusually complex incidents. For example, one may be further trained for catastrophic earthquake response, whereas another might cultivate unique skills for response related to weapons of mass destruction or pandemic influenza.

**Pre-Designated PFOs and FCOs.** In certain scenarios, the Secretary of Homeland Security may pre-designate a PFO and/or FCO. Such pre-designation can focus on specified geographic areas or be based on specific potential threats – or a combination of both. For example, beginning in 2007, the Secretary pre-designated a national PFO and five regional PFOs together with a national FCO and regional FCOs, who will serve in the event of a nationwide outbreak of pandemic influenza or other similar nationwide biological event.



### CHAPTER III: RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

Pre-designation of these leadership teams is allowing for sustained advance planning conducted with State, tribal, and local leaders.

**Federal Resource Coordinator (FRC).** In non-Stafford Act situations, when a Federal department or agency acting under its own authority has requested the assistance of the Secretary of Homeland Security to obtain support from other Federal departments and agencies, DHS may designate an FRC. In these situations, the FRC coordinates support through interagency agreements and memorandums of understanding. Relying on the same skill set, DHS may select the FRC from the FCO cadre or other personnel with equivalent knowledge, skills, and abilities. The FRC is responsible for coordinating timely delivery of resources to the requesting agency.

**Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO).** DOD has appointed 10 DCOs and assigned one to each FEMA region. If requested and approved, the DCO serves as DOD's single point of contact at the JFO for requesting assistance from DOD. With few exceptions, requests for Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) originating at the JFO are coordinated with and processed through the DCO. The DCO may have a Defense Coordinating Element consisting of a staff and military liaison officers to facilitate coordination and support to activated ESFs.

Specific responsibilities of the DCO (subject to modification based on the situation) include processing requirements for military support, forwarding mission assignments to the appropriate military organizations through DOD-designated channels, and assigning military liaisons, as appropriate, to activated ESFs.

**Senior Federal Law Enforcement Official (SFLEO).** The SFLEO is an official appointed by the Attorney General during an incident requiring a coordinated Federal response to coordinate all law enforcement, public safety, and security operations with intelligence or investigative law enforcement operations directly related to the incident. The SFLEO is a member of the Unified Coordination Group and, as such, is responsible to ensure that allocation of law enforcement requirements and resource allocations are coordinated as appropriate with all other members of the Group. In the event of a terrorist incident, the SFLEO will normally be a senior FBI official who has coordinating authority over all law enforcement activities related to the incident, both those falling within the Attorney General's explicit authority as recognized in HSPD-5 and those otherwise directly related to the incident itself.

**Joint Task Force (JTF) Commander.** Based on the complexity and type of incident, and the anticipated level of DOD resource involvement, DOD may elect to designate a JTF to command Federal (Title 10) military activities in support of the incident objectives. If a JTF is established, consistent with operational requirements, its command and control element will be co-located with the senior on-scene leadership at the JFO to ensure coordination and unity of effort. The co-location of the JTF command and control element does not replace the requirement for a DCO/Defense Coordinating Element as part of the JFO Unified Coordination Staff. The DCO remains the DOD single point of contact in the JFO for requesting assistance from DOD.

### **CHAPTER III: RESPONSE ORGANIZATION**

The JTF Commander exercises operational control of Federal military personnel and most defense resources in a Federal response. Some DOD entities, such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, may respond under separate established authorities and do not provide support under the operational control of a JTF Commander. Unless federalized, National Guard forces remain under the control of a State Governor. Close coordination between Federal military, other DOD entities, and National Guard forces in a response is critical.

**Other Senior Officials.** Based on the scope and nature of an incident, senior officials from other Federal departments and agencies, State, tribal, or local governments, and the private sector or NGOs may participate in a Unified Coordination Group. Usually, the larger and more complex the incident, the greater the number of entities represented.

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## CHAPTER IV

# PLANNING: A CRITICAL ELEMENT OF EFFECTIVE RESPONSE

**This chapter emphasizes the importance of planning as the cornerstone of national preparedness and briefly summarizes planning structures that are relevant to the *Framework*.**

Federal, State, tribal, and local government planning is mutually supportive. Planning for low-probability, high-consequence scenarios is a Federal focus and complements a State, tribal, and local focus on more likely and frequently experienced smaller-scale events.

### ***THE FRAMEWORK AND PLANNING***

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Planning across the full range of homeland security operations is an inherent responsibility of every level of government. This *Framework* fosters unity of effort for emergency operations planning by providing common doctrine and purpose.

A plan is a continuous, evolving instrument of anticipated actions that maximize opportunities and guide response operations. Since planning is an ongoing process, a plan is an interim product based on information and understanding at the moment, and is subject to revision. That is why plans are best described as "living" documents.

### ***THE VALUE OF PLANNING***

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Planning provides three principal benefits: (1) it allows jurisdictions to influence the course of events in an emergency by determining in advance the actions, policies, and processes that will be followed; (2) it guides other preparedness activities; and (3) it contributes to unity of effort by providing a common blueprint for activity in the event of an emergency. Planning is a foundational element of both preparedness and response and thus is an essential homeland security activity. Emergency planning is a national priority, as reflected in the *National Preparedness Guidelines*.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> HSPD-8, "National Preparedness," required the development of the National Preparedness Goal, since renamed the *National Preparedness Guidelines*.

## NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS ARCHITECTURE

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A great deal has been accomplished in developing a rigorous national preparedness architecture that enables all levels of government to successfully plan for response operations. These efforts have yielded the *National Preparedness Guidelines*; the *National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP)* and 17 sector-specific plans to protect critical infrastructure; the *National Incident Management System (NIMS)*; National Continuity policies and directives; a coordinated National Exercise Schedule; and support through an extensive portfolio of grant programs.

**A national focus on preparedness is imperative to develop the capabilities that empower the *Framework* and response planning.** The *National Preparedness Guidelines* and the *NIPP* focus on **preparedness activities** conducted in the absence of a specific threat or hazard. The *Framework* uses these programs and investments to build the capacity to respond to all manner and magnitude of threats and hazards.

The *National Preparedness Guidelines* are comprised of four critical elements:

- The **National Preparedness Vision** provides a concise statement of the core preparedness goal for the Nation.
- The **National Planning Scenarios** are planning tools that represent a minimum number of credible scenarios depicting the range of potential terrorist attacks and natural disasters and related impacts facing our Nation. They form a basis for coordinated Federal planning, training, and exercises.
- The **Universal Task List** is a menu of unique tasks that link strategies to prevention, protection, response, and recovery tasks for the major events represented by the National Planning Scenarios. It provides a common vocabulary of critical tasks that support development of essential capabilities among organizations at all levels. The List was used to assist in creating the Target Capabilities List.
- The **Target Capabilities List** defines specific capabilities that all levels of government should possess in order to respond effectively to incidents.

**The *NIPP* and its 17 sector-specific plans create a system for protection of critical infrastructure and key resources that includes both the public and private sectors.** It establishes protection standards and objectives developed in partnership with each of the 17 sectors, and creates consultative mechanisms, including those for sharing key threat information, with the private sector which owns or operates most of the Nation's critical infrastructure.

Publication of these strategic documents – supported by others developed at the Federal, State, tribal, and local levels – defines the essential architecture of our national preparedness system and marks a significant milestone in post-9/11 preparedness.

## THE FEDERAL PLANNING STRUCTURE

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The Federal planning structure supports the *Framework* and the State, tribal, and local planning structure through the *National Preparedness Guidelines*, including the National Planning Scenarios and core capabilities; the *NIMS*; the *NIPP* and sector-specific plans; Federal strategic and concept plans for each set of National Planning Scenarios, supported by department and agency operations plans; National Continuity policies and directives; and a National Exercise Schedule that incorporates Federal, State, tribal, and local exercises.

**The National Planning Scenarios are the focus of Federal planning efforts.** They represent examples of the gravest dangers facing the United States **and have been accorded the highest priority for Federal planning.** Using a shared set of scenarios provides a common yardstick for determining how to achieve expected planning results. Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8, "National Preparedness," Annex I (National Planning), describes use of the National Planning Scenarios. The 15 scenarios have been grouped into 8 key scenario sets that reflect common characteristics in order to integrate planning for like events, and to conduct cross-cutting capability development. The scenarios will be updated and amended on a biennial basis using risk-based analysis to ascertain the most likely or most dangerous threats to the homeland.

Building on the principles described within the *Framework*, the Federal planning structure calls for three levels of Federal plans for each National Planning Scenario:

- **A Strategic Guidance Statement and Strategic Plan** that together define the broad national strategic objectives; delineate authorities, roles, and responsibilities; determine required capabilities; and develop performance and effectiveness measures essential to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents.
- **A National-Level Interagency Concept Plan (CONPLAN)** that describes the concept of operations for integrating and synchronizing Federal capabilities to accomplish critical tasks, and describes how Federal capabilities will be integrated into and support regional, State, and local plans to meet the objectives described in the Strategic Plan.
- **Federal Department and Agency Operations Plans (OPLANs)** developed by and for each Federal department or agency describing detailed resource, personnel, and asset allocations necessary to support the concept of operations detailed in the CONPLAN.

The *Framework* and planning structure leverage existing plans and planning activities. For example, pandemic influenza is one of the scenarios in the *Guidelines*. A *National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza* was published in November 2005 for this scenario.<sup>51</sup> It included extensive public comment and collaboration with public health and emergency management professionals at all levels. That document is available at the **NRF Resource Center** in support of the *Framework*. A detailed concept of operations consistent with the *Framework* has been drafted, and each department and agency has drafted individual operational plans that describe how they will employ specific resources, personnel, and assets.

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<sup>51</sup> See <http://www.whitehouse.gov/homeland/pandemic-influenza.html>.

## THE STATE, TRIBAL, AND LOCAL PLANNING STRUCTURE

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State, tribal, and local governments have responsibility to develop detailed, robust all-hazards plans and hazard- or incident-specific annexes with supporting procedures and protocols to address their locally identified hazards and risks. They use hazard identification and risk assessment (HIRA) to identify hazards and associated risk to persons, property, and structures and to improve protection from natural- and human-caused hazards. HIRA serves as a foundation for planning, resource management, capability development, public education, and training and exercises.

The State, tribal, and local planning structure is supported by Federal preparedness assistance. This structure in turn supports the *Framework* and the Federal planning structure by building capabilities that contribute to national response capacity. The key scenario sets represent hazards of nationwide concern. They should be included in State, tribal, and local governments' HIRA processes in order to ensure plans are tested against all manner and magnitude of threats and hazards, and that national planning is fully integrated and mutually supportive.

In most instances, Federal plans are implemented when a State's resources are not sufficient to cope with an incident and the Governor has requested Federal assistance. The intersection of the Federal and State, tribal, and local plans and planning is described in the new Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101, "Producing Emergency Plans: A Guide for All-Hazard Emergency Operations Planning for State, Territorial, Local and Tribal Governments," which replaces State and Local Guide (SLG) 101, "Guide for All-Hazards Emergency Operations Planning."

## CRITERIA FOR SUCCESSFUL PLANNING

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The *Framework* employs common criteria to measure key aspects of response planning:

- **Acceptability.** A plan is acceptable if it can meet the requirements of anticipated scenarios, can be implemented within the costs and timeframes that senior officials and the public can support, and is consistent with applicable laws.
- **Adequacy.** A plan is adequate if it complies with applicable planning guidance, planning assumptions are valid and relevant, and the concept of operations identifies and addresses critical tasks specific to the plan's objectives.
- **Completeness.** A plan is complete if it incorporates major actions, objectives, and tasks to be accomplished. The complete plan addresses the personnel and resources required and sound concepts for how those will be deployed, employed, sustained, and demobilized. It also addresses timelines and criteria for measuring success in achieving objectives, and the desired end state. Completeness of a plan can be greatly enhanced by including in the planning process all those who could be affected.
- **Consistency and Standardization of Products.** Standardized planning processes and products foster consistency, interoperability, and collaboration.

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- **Feasibility.** A plan is considered feasible if the critical tasks can be accomplished with the resources available internally or through mutual aid, immediate need for additional resources from other sources (in the case of a local plan, from State or Federal partners) are identified in detail and coordinated in advance, and procedures are in place to integrate and employ resources effectively from all potential providers.
- **Flexibility.** Flexibility and adaptability are promoted by decentralized decisionmaking and by accommodating all hazards ranging from smaller-scale incidents to wider national contingencies.
- **Interoperability and Collaboration.** A plan is interoperable and collaborative if it identifies other plan holders with similar and complementary plans and objectives, and supports regular collaboration focused on integrating with those plans to optimize achievement of individual and collective goals and objectives in an incident.

Table 3 shows the relationship of the scenario sets to the National Planning Scenarios.

**Table 3. Relationship of Scenario Sets to Planning Scenarios**

<b>Key Scenario Sets</b>	<b>National Planning Scenarios</b>
<b>1. Explosives Attack – Bombing Using Improvised Explosive Device</b>	• <b>Scenario 12:</b> Explosives Attack – Bombing Using Improvised Explosive Device
<b>2. Nuclear Attack</b>	• <b>Scenario 1:</b> Nuclear Detonation – Improvised Nuclear Device
<b>3. Radiological Attack – Radiological Dispersal Device</b>	• <b>Scenario 11:</b> Radiological Attack – Radiological Dispersal Device
<b>4. Biological Attack – With annexes for different pathogens</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Scenario 2:</b> Biological Attack – Aerosol Anthrax</li> <li>• <b>Scenario 4:</b> Biological Attack – Plague</li> <li>• <b>Scenario 13:</b> Biological Attack – Food Contamination</li> <li>• <b>Scenario 14:</b> Biological Attack – Foreign Animal Disease</li> </ul>
<b>5. Chemical Attack – With annexes for different agents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Scenario 5:</b> Chemical Attack – Blister Agent</li> <li>• <b>Scenario 6:</b> Chemical Attack – Toxic Industrial Chemicals</li> <li>• <b>Scenario 7:</b> Chemical Attack – Nerve Agent</li> <li>• <b>Scenario 8:</b> Chemical Attack – Chlorine Tank Explosion</li> </ul>
<b>6. Natural Disaster – With annexes for different disasters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Scenario 9:</b> Natural Disaster – Major Earthquake</li> <li>• <b>Scenario 10:</b> Natural Disaster – Major Hurricane</li> </ul>
<b>7. Cyber Attack</b>	• <b>Scenario 15:</b> Cyber Attack
<b>8. Pandemic Influenza</b>	• <b>Scenario 3:</b> Biological Disease Outbreak – Pandemic Influenza



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## CHAPTER V

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

As indicated earlier, the *National Response Framework* is comprised of the core document, the Emergency Support Function (ESF), Support, and Incident Annexes, and the Partner Guides. The *Framework* is supported by an online tool designed especially for emergency management practitioners, the NRF Resource Center (<http://www.fema.gov/NRF>). This online resource will grow and routinely evolve in support of the *Framework* and those who work with it. The core *Framework* should require significant change only infrequently. However, the operational planning and detailed work of developing stronger emergency management plans and capabilities will require a continued rapid pace of change in the months and years ahead.

The NRF Resource Center is intended to supply a nimble, state-of-the-art forum for sharing and encouraging such improvement. **This chapter describes how additional resources and operational information will be made available, especially to emergency management practitioners, in support of the *Framework*.**

### SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS AND THE NRF RESOURCE CENTER

To assist readers in implementing the *Framework*, the Resource Center is an online repository of supporting documents, resources, and educational materials. It is intended especially to assist emergency management practitioners. This repository provides a single, Web-based portal for documents, information, training materials, and other tools needed for response partners to understand and execute their roles under the *Framework*.

Formally cleared annexes, resources, and other reference material associated with the *Framework* are posted on this portal. In addition, the Resource Center portal will be dynamic, providing links to additional preparedness resources and updating the *Framework's* formal supporting documents as necessary.

The online Resource Center's home page may be found at <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>. As all Resource Center postings will be routinely evaluated, updated, and augmented, the remainder of this chapter contains a roadmap of what initially conveys from the *National Response Plan (NRP)* and an outline of work to come.

The Resource Center contains multiple supporting documents, including ESF, Support, and Incident Annexes and several informational documents, such as an overview of the main Stafford Act provisions, a guide to authorities and references, and an acronym list. As noted in Chapter IV, ongoing planning activities will result in the development of additional strategic guidance and plans, which will be added to the Resource Center upon approval and as necessary.

As mentioned earlier, the Emergency Support Function Annexes group Federal resources and capabilities into functional areas that are most frequently needed in a national response. The revised ESF Annexes reflect real-world experience. For example, at a Joint

## CHAPTER V: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Field Office, instead of working in separate ESF structures, the Operations Section Chief might establish a mass evacuation branch or group to examine cross-cutting issues and request representatives from *Transportation* (ESF #1), *Public Health and Medical Services* (ESF #8) and *Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services* (ESF #6). This approach retains the functional expertise of ESFs but leverages cross-cutting teams to ensure an effective and integrated response.

The Support Annexes describe how Federal departments and agencies, the private sector, volunteer organizations, and NGOs coordinate and execute the common support processes and administrative tasks required during an incident. The actions described in the Support Annexes are not limited to particular types of events, but are overarching in nature and applicable to nearly every type of incident. In addition, they may support several ESFs.

The Support Annexes provide a starting point to understand support needed under the *Framework*. Further assessment is required to evaluate essential local, tribal, State, Federal, and private-sector resources needed to execute the capabilities specified by the *National Preparedness Guidelines*. We will then build repeatedly on these annexes to develop support tools tailored to meet the Nation's response requirements.

The Incident Annexes describe the concept of operations to address specific contingency or hazard situations or an element of an incident requiring specialized application of the *Framework*. The overarching nature of functions described in these annexes frequently involves either support to or cooperation of all Federal departments and agencies involved in incident management efforts to ensure seamless integration of and transitions between preparedness, prevention, response, recovery, and mitigation activities.

**Initial NRF Resource Center Documentation.** Initial postings to the Web page supporting the *Framework* include the following:

### 1. Emergency Support Function Annexes

- ESF #1 - Transportation
- ESF #2 - Communications
- ESF #3 - Public Works and Engineering
- ESF #4 - Firefighting
- ESF #5 - Emergency Management
- ESF #6 - Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services
- ESF #7 - Logistics Management and Resource Support
- ESF #8 - Public Health and Medical Services
- ESF #9 - Search and Rescue
- ESF #10 - Oil and Hazardous Materials Response
- ESF #11 - Agriculture and Natural Resources
- ESF #12 - Energy
- ESF #13 - Public Safety and Security
- ESF #14 - Long-Term Community Recovery
- ESF #15 - External Affairs

### 2. Support Annexes

- Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources
- Financial Management
- International Coordination
- Private-Sector Coordination

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- Public Affairs
- Tribal Relations
- Volunteer and Donations Management
- Worker Safety and Health

### 3. Incident Annexes

- Biological Incident
- Catastrophic Incident
- Cyber Incident
- Food and Agriculture Incident
- Mass Evacuation Incident
- Nuclear/Radiological Incident
- Terrorism Incident Law Enforcement and Investigation

### 4. Partner Guides

- Local Government Response Partner Guide
- State Response Partner Guide
- Private-Sector and Nongovernmental Response Partner Guide
- Federal Response Partner Guide

### 5. References

- Glossary of Key Terms
- List of Acronyms
- Authorities and References
- Overview of Stafford Act
- Key resource references: *The National Incident Management System; National Infrastructure Protection Plan; sector-specific plans, etc.*

### 6. Learning Center

The *Framework* will incorporate a learning center that includes job aids, educational tools, links to the broader range of preparedness reports and documentation, and access to Web-based training courses. It will contain material that is routinely evaluated and updated for accuracy and currency.

## **EFFECTIVE DATE AND FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION**

The *National Response Framework* builds upon and supersedes the *National Response Plan* (December 2004, as amended May 2006). The changes reflected in this document are not substantively dramatic, and in no regard does this *Framework* alter the basic *NIMS*-based structures adopted for field-based incident management structures and activities.

Because the *Framework* builds on capabilities developed under the *NRP*, its implementation will be streamlined and requirements for new training will be minimal.

The effective date for implementation will be 60 days after final publication.

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# ACRONYMS

**CIKR:** Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources  
**CONPLAN:** [National-Level Interagency] Concept Plan  
**CPG:** Comprehensive Preparedness Guide  
**CSG:** Counterterrorism Security Group  
**DCO:** Defense Coordinating Officer  
**DHS:** Department of Homeland Security  
**DOD:** Department of Defense  
**DRG:** Domestic Readiness Group  
**DSCA:** Defense Support of Civil Authorities  
**EMAC:** Emergency Management Assistance Compact  
**EOC:** Emergency Operations Center  
**ESF:** Emergency Support Function  
**FBI:** Federal Bureau of Investigation  
**FCO:** Federal Coordinating Officer  
**FEMA:** Federal Emergency Management Agency  
**FRC:** Federal Resource Coordinator  
**HIRA:** Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment  
**HLT:** Hurricane Liaison Team  
**HSC:** Homeland Security Council  
**HSEEP:** Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program  
**HSIN:** Homeland Security Information Network  
**HSPD:** Homeland Security Presidential Directive  
**ICS:** Incident Command System  
**IMAT:** Incident Management Assistance Team  
**IMT:** Incident Management Team  
**JFO:** Joint Field Office  
**JIC:** Joint Information Center  
**JOC:** Joint Operations Center

**JTF:** Joint Task Force  
**MACS:** Multiagency Coordination System  
**MERS:** Mobile Emergency Response Support  
**NCTC:** National Counterterrorism Center  
**NGO:** Nongovernmental Organization  
**NICC:** National Infrastructure Coordinating Center  
**NIMS:** *National Incident Management System*  
**NIPP:** *National Infrastructure Protection Plan*  
**NJTTF:** National Joint Terrorism Task Force  
**NMCC:** National Military Command Center  
**NOC:** National Operations Center  
**NRCC:** National Response Coordination Center  
**NRF:** *National Response Framework*  
**NRP:** *National Response Plan*  
**NSC:** National Security Council  
**OPLAN:** Operations Plan  
**P.L.:** Public Law  
**PFO:** Principal Federal Official  
**RRCC:** Regional Response Coordination Center  
**SCO:** State Coordinating Officer  
**SIOC:** Strategic Information and Operations Center  
**SLG:** State and Local Guide  
**SFLEO:** Senior Federal Law Enforcement Official  
**U.S.C.:** U.S. Code  
**US&R:** Urban Search and Rescue  
**[National] VOAD:** Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

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## Homeland Security

Printed copies of the *National Response Framework* can be ordered from the  
FEMA Publications Warehouse by calling 1-800-480-2520.  
Refer to FEMA Publication P-682 (Catalog Number 08011-1).

[www.fema.gov/NRF](http://www.fema.gov/NRF)