

ESF 09 - Search and Rescue Annex, 2015

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Coordinating Agency : Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)

Primary Agency(ies) : Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)

Support Agency(ies) : Civil Air Patrol
PA Fire Commissioner's Office
PA State Police
PA Game Commission
PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
PA Department of Environmental Protection
PA Department of Military & Veterans Affairs
PA Fish & Boat Commission

I. Introduction

A. Purpose

1. To describe resources, responsibilities and procedures for search and rescue within the Commonwealth, including deployment of the Pennsylvania Search and Rescue Response System.
2. The mission of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) Special Deployment and Response Office (SD&RO) is to promote, facilitate and support the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's residents and visitors through PEMA to prepare for, respond to and support at natural and man-made disasters in conjunction with our local, state, and federal partners.
3. To accomplish this mission, Pennsylvania Task Force 2 (PA-TF2) was developed to provide efficient and effective search and rescue technologies in a planned and measured response that mirrors the Federal Emergency Management Agency's guidelines on Search and Rescue.
4. PA-TF2 teams will conduct search and rescue operations in a professional, ethical, and compassionate manner that will protect the dignity of the victims and the communities served. The teams will develop and maintain the highest level of skills and capabilities required when deployed to natural or manmade disasters, including hurricanes, floods, conflagrations, explosions, earthquakes, or the use of weapons of mass destruction that result in events that are beyond the capability of local emergency service resources. PA-TF2 capabilities will include rapid mobilization to assist in natural or manmade disasters.

B. Scope of Operations

1. Pennsylvania has search and rescue elements at all levels of government. While primary responsibility for search and rescue operations rests with local government, the state and federal governments have equipped and trained specialized search and rescue teams for

use in collapsed building or urban situations. This ESF will coordinate all search and rescue operations, with emphasis on specialized resources available through Regional Task Force, municipal, State or Federal governments.

II. Situation and Assumptions

A. Situation

1. Persons may become lost or missing for a variety of reasons, ranging from disasters and emergencies to physical disability or injury to lack of familiarity with the terrain. No matter what the reason, their safety requires a prompt, coordinated response to recover them and return them to their families or provide them with medical treatment if necessary. In the event of lost or missing persons, families, or expeditions; local woodsmen, farmers, and sportsmen may prove a valuable local terrain and climate information resource.
2. Local volunteer organizations including fire departments and wilderness search teams are available to assist local government.
3. If the subject of the search is lost on State Lands, the Department of Conservation of Natural Resources (DCNR) will be responsible for search operations.
4. Underground Search and Rescue operations (collapsed mines or caves) will be coordinated at the state level by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Bureau of Deep Mine Safety.
5. The National Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Response System assists and augments state, regional, county and local Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) capabilities. PA Task Force 1 (PA TF1), is a federally-certified Urban Search and Rescue Task Force and is subject to being deployed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
6. The Pennsylvania US&R Response System is an integrated system of eight 8 urban search and rescue components (strike team, companies, and squad), one Incident Management Team (IMT), and PA Task Force 1 (when not performing federal duties).
7. The system is built around a core of personnel and organizations prepared to deploy immediately.
8. IMTs provide coordination and logistical support during emergency operations. IMTs support incident and unified command functions in accordance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

B. Assumptions

1. Research has shown that any delay will seriously reduce the chance of a successful search and rescue operation.
2. Local search and rescue organizations will be the first to respond.

3. In a major disaster local search and rescue organizations will be overwhelmed, requiring Commonwealth assistance.
4. Local residents, workers and/or emergent volunteers will usually lack specialized equipment and training.
5. Access to damaged areas will be limited.
6. Following a disaster, both disaster victims and rescue personnel may be threatened by secondary events.
7. Large scale operations or disasters may require assistance from federal, state and regional assets.

III. Concept of Operations

A. General

1. Local government, using local resources has the primary responsibility for search and rescue on non-public land. Incidents on state-owned land will be the responsibility of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR.) In both cases, they will rely on local volunteers and staff to initiate search and rescue activities. If local resources prove inadequate, local authorities should look to mutual aid from adjoining municipalities, assistance from county EMA or the Regional Task Force. If state or federal-level assets are required, the county EMA or DCNR incident commander should forward the request to the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) located in the PEMA headquarters building.
2. As the primary state level agency for ESF #9, PEMA will coordinate the activation of appropriate state-level resources, or the request for local-level resources from across the Commonwealth.
 - a. PEMA will request SAR components of Pennsylvania Task Force 2 (PA-TF2) through activation for structural collapse, wilderness incidents, swiftwater and flood incidents, victims entrapped/entombed by collapse (above or below grade), and rescue by helicopter hoisting operations where local resources may become overwhelmed.
 - b. PEMA will request Civil Air Patrol (CAP) activation for wilderness incidents where local resources may become overwhelmed, or where a need for CAP assistance is demonstrated.
 - c. PEMA will notify the DEP Bureau of Deep Mine Safety of any incidents involving persons trapped or missing underground.
 - d. The director of PEMA will activate PA-TF2 for in-state operations.

- e. The director of PEMA will activate PA TF-1 (if available) for in-state operations to support PA-TF2. When operating inside Pennsylvania, PA TF-1 is not a part of the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System.
 - f. PEMA will request activation of the National US&R Response System and response by an out-of-state team for any incident or anticipated incident that is determined likely to result in the overwhelming of existing state, regional and local resources.
3. When requested by local officials, PEMA will request Civil Air Patrol (CAP) for wilderness search and rescue or other support missions.

B. Organization

1. All search and rescue operations will follow the incident command system, with a single incident commander (search commander) who will direct search operations.
2. All search and rescue organizations will be organized in accordance with the NIMS Resource-Management Initiative Resource Definitions.
3. The CAP has personnel trained in wilderness search and rescue and incident command. The CAP is administered by the state Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, but receives its mission tasking's from the U.S. Air Force Rescue and Coordination Center (AFRCC) or the Air Force National Security Emergency Preparedness Office (AFNSEP). Requests for CAP assistance will be forwarded by PEMA (SEOC) to AFRCC or AFNSEP. In the absence of AFRCC or AFNSEP authorization, PEMA or DMVA may request a state mission directly through the CAP Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer (EPLO).
4. The US&R State coordinator (US&RSC) is the PEMA Special Deployment and Response Office Director. The county EMC is designated as the coordinator for the county (US&RCC). Volunteer and career US&R organizations participate in operations in accordance with agreements between the US&R organization, PEMA, and with county and local municipal coordinators. Federal agencies participate in US&R operations in response to requests or based on statutory US&R responsibilities.

IV. Responsibilities

A. Coordinating Agency

1. Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency
 - a. Monitor, through the State EOC, all search and rescue operations in the Commonwealth.
 - b. Assist local S&R efforts by identifying and requesting outside resources, including CAP and other state and federal resources, as needed.

- c. Coordinate state US&R efforts and assist with coordination of national and international incidents.
- d. Provide training through the Pennsylvania State Fire Academy and FEMA for US&R personnel.
- e. Prepare and maintain plans and procedures for use of PA-TF2 assets.
- f. Provide, as requested by DHS, FEMA, needed PA-TF2 services and activities in coordination with federal ESF #9.
- g. Provide a radio communications link between US&RSC, US&RCC, PA-TF2 incident commander and PA-TF2 units.
- h. Maintain accurate records of all operations to support reimbursement and damage claims.
- i. Establish specific mutual aid agreements regarding reimbursement and liability for actions as well as injuries.
- j. Maintain resource lists detailing information on PA-TF2 units, specialized skilled personnel, PA-TF2 dog capabilities and other specialized equipment.
- k. Place high priority in establishing dedicated PA-TF2 communications networks which will be responsive to PA-TF2 needs and not be oversaturated by the wide variety of users in PA-TF2 operations.
- l. Initiate as appropriate Advisories, Alerts, Activations, and Demobilization Orders.

B. Support Agencies

- 1. Pennsylvania State Police
 - a. Notify the SEOC of SAR incidents.
 - b. Assist local officials in the conduct of SAR operations.
 - c. Provide operational support upon request of US&R coordinator.
 - d. Provide appropriate security, traffic and access control at the scene of SAR operations.
- 2. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
 - a. Assume responsibility, including Incident Command of all search operations on state parks.

- b. Provide assistance, facilities or equipment in support of SAR operations upon request of the SAR coordinator.
3. Department of Environmental Protection
 - a. Assume jurisdiction over, to include assumption of incident command if necessary, all underground search and rescue operations.
4. Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
 - a. Provide support as requested to assist in SAR operations.
 - b. Provide support as requested for the Pennsylvania Helicopter Aquatics Rescue Team (PA-HART)
5. Fish and Boat Commission
 - a. Assist with SAR operations carried out along waterways and at or in the vicinity of water impoundments.
 - b. Develop and employ appropriate water rescue curriculum.
6. Game Commission
 - a. Assist, as requested by PEMA, with Search & Rescue operations, particularly in State Game Lands.
7. The Office of the State Fire Commissioner
 - a. Conduct training and certification programs as necessary to support the technical training needs of PA-TF2 personnel.
8. Civil Air Patrol
 - a. Assume responsibility, including incident command, if requested, of all search operations for missing aircraft or emergency locator transmitters.
 - b. Provide air and/or ground search teams as needed for wilderness searches.
 - c. Assist local officials in the conduct of Search & Rescue.
 - d. Provide incident command staff to augment local and state EOC and Incident Command staffs.

V. Administration and Logistics

A. Administration

1. The IC will appoint an Admin Officer to maintain accurate records of operations by outside forces to support reimbursement and damage claims.

B. Logistics

1. PEMA will establish specific mutual aid agreements regarding reimbursement and liability for actions and injuries.
2. PEMA will maintain resource lists at the SEOC detailing information on SAR units, SAR dog capabilities, and specialized equipment.