

Mississippi Emergency Support Function #4 – Firefighting Annex

MS ESF #4 Coordinator:

Mississippi Fire Marshal's Office

MS Primary Agency:

Mississippi Insurance Department

Federal ESF Coordinator:

Department of Agriculture/U.S. Forest

Federal Primary Agency

Department of Agriculture/U.S. Forest Service

MS Support Agencies:

Mississippi Forestry Commission
Mississippi Military Department
Mississippi State Fire Academy
Mississippi Emergency Management
Agency

Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of this Emergency Support Function is to provide state support to local government in major fire suppression which includes wildfires located in the wilderness, rural, suburban, or urban areas of the state. These major fires may result from, or occur coincidentally with a catastrophic natural disaster, technological disaster, man made disaster, or act of terrorism.

Scope

If an emergency or major disaster occurs that overwhelms local fire resources, this ESF#4 of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan will be activated to provide support to those jurisdictions affected. The support provided through this ESF#4 function will be obtained through the Statewide Mutual Aid Compact, (SMAC) or the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC).

If such a fire related emergency or major disaster grows beyond the state's capabilities, the National Response Framework will be activated with the US Department of Agriculture/Forest Service (USDAFS) having primary coordination responsibilities.

Policies

- All state assistance provided to local areas, whether from state agencies, other states, or the federal Government, will be coordinated by ESF#4, located at the SEOC through EOC Operations.
 - Priority is given to firefighter and public safety and protecting property, in that order.
 - Acquisition of resources acquired by ESF#4 in support of, county and municipal structural fire suppression organizations is accomplished through State, Regional, and County Fire Coordinators. Support of wildland fires is coordinated by the State Forester Emergency Coordinator and the State Fire Coordinator.
 - All local resources will be expended or committed by local government before assistance is requested from other local governments through the State Mutual Aid Compact (EMAC), or from the Federal government.
 - There shall be frequent consultation between state officials who have emergency management responsibilities, other appropriate representatives of party states, and the Federal government with the objective of a free exchange of information, plans, and resource records relating to emergency capabilities.
 - Each participating agency will coordinate its support with both ESF#4 and ESF#5. This coordination is essential whether or not the State Emergency Response Team (SERT), or Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNA) may be operating from the SEOC, from the forward State Hurricane Support Center (SHSC), the State Earthquake Support Center (SESC), or MEMA's Mobile Operations Center (MOBOPS).
 - The Incident Command System (ICS) will be used in managing the response effort.
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Concept of Operations

Assumptions

- Local fire services mutual aid agreements and other compacts will be activated as appropriate. Note that most fires are handled and suppressed by the local department of the affected area. However, this ESF would be activated when their resources and mutual aid agreements have been exhausted and State assistance is required.
- All available local, private, semi-private, and State resources will be employed through SMAC to the maximum extent possible to contain and suppress both large, urban fires and wildfires.
- Should the above available resources become over-taxed for any reason, assistance from Federal ESF4 agencies would be requested.

General

- When activated, ESF#4 will manage and coordinate the State firefighting activities from the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC). ESF#4 will operate under the Unified Command Concept. The nature of the fire dictates whether the State Fire Coordinator or the Chief Forester leads the ESF4 efforts.
- A catastrophic situation may require the establishment of an additional forward coordination element at one or more of the district offices or at another facility near the fire impacted area.
- State fire suppression operations will be accomplished by mobilizing State firefighting resources in support of local fire departments upon request by local government.
- The responsibility for a fire scene situation assessment lies primarily with Local Incident Commanders and their firefighting personnel. They make a request to their local EOC for State resources, if needed, who in turn will contact the SEOC for that assistance.
- County Fire Coordinators are divided into ten regions coordinated through the State Fire Coordinator's office.
- The State Forestry Commission office is also located in Jackson and has 4 districts offices, each headed by a District Forester, and is all coordinated through the State Office.
- All designated ECOs from primary and support agencies report to the SEOC where direct coordination of firefighting resources and response activities will take place.
- Close liaison is maintained with the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Department of Agriculture in order to ensure awareness for potential mobilization.
- If State emergency fire resources have either been exhausted or are expected to be exhausted prior to meeting the demand, the State ECO for ESF#4 will recommend that assistance be requested from other states through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), or from FEMA. Such a request to FEMA for assistance could prompt the implementation of the National Response Framework .

Organization

ESF#4 is part of the SEOC Operations Section, Emergency Services Branch.

Field Units

- Field units are each of the sites with an Incident Commander.
- ESF#4 may be asked to provide personnel to the Joint Field Office (JFO) to work closely with their federal counterparts.

Administrative and Logistical Support

- All agencies supporting this ESF will receive primary administrative support from their parent organization with additional support from MEMA as needed.
- Logistical support will be provided to participating agencies at the established Point(s) of Arrival (POA), Mobilization Centers (MC), and Staging Areas (SA).

Actions

Preparedness

- The State Fire Coordinator, Department of Insurance in conjunction with support agencies:
- Ensures that ESF SOPs are developed and maintained that conform to this plan and provide greater detail on the ESF operations
- Trains and exercises ESF#4 personnel.
- Supports development and maintenance of SOPs to enable them to perform appropriate levels of fire-related response and recovery.

Pre-Incident

- Provide staffing of ESF#4 personnel if 24 hour coverage is necessary.

Incident

- Upon activation of ESF#4, ECO will communicate information to all other ESF#4 members.
- Establish communication links with the Regional/Area Fire Coordinators.
- Obtain an initial fire situation and damage assessment through established intelligence procedures.
- Provide technical advice and assistance for the containment and extinction of the fire(s) if requested.
- Coordinate the distribution of assets as requested.
- Coordinate the State's fire suppression resources with the Federal supplemental resources if necessary.
- Maintain a complete log of actions taken, resource orders, records, and reports utilizing MEMA Tracking System.
- Assist in gathering and providing information to ESF#5 for establishing priorities.
- Maintain close consultation with USDA/USFS in order to ensure awareness for potential Federal ESF#4 mobilization, if required.
- Obtain, maintain, and provide incident situation and damage assessment information through established procedures.
- Coordinate all ESF#4 activities with MEMA and all support agencies tasked in this document.
- Assist in the overall assessment and evaluation of the magnitude of the fire(s).

Recovery

- For wildland fires, the Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC) evaluates the burned areas. This evaluation will be conducted with regard to the need for salvage and reforestation.
- For wildland fires, MFC requests evaluations are conducted by responsible state agencies on wildlife habitat and watershed damage: MS Department of Environmental Quality and the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks.

- If the burn site was in an urban area, primary clean-up will be the responsibility of each individual business entity or homeowner that was affected.

Post-Incident

- Collects initial observations within 10 days of stand-down.
- Prepare an after-action report. The after-action report identifies key problems, indicates how they are to be/were solved, and makes recommendations for improving ESF response operations. All ESF#4 organizations assist in preparation of the after-action report.

Mitigation

A mitigation plan is developed after the event.

Responsibilities

In accordance with Section 3-15-14(2)(a)(viii), MS Code of 1972, annotated, all agencies with ESF#4 responsibilities will ensure that they have Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in place to enable them to perform appropriate levels of mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery related to firefighting.

State Fire Coordinator

- Assist in the preparation and submission of damage assessment and other fire-related reports.
- Assist in the overall assessment and evaluation of the magnitude of the fire(s).
- Develop and maintain a database of fire departments, personnel and equipment within Mississippi and make a determination of the types and amounts of assistance that might be available from the local departments in a catastrophic event.

Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC)

- Administer and manage the Commission's current fire suppression capabilities.
- Submit through the Governor/Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) a request for Federal assistance.

State Fire Academy (SFA)

- Assist ESF#4 in staffing.
- Provide technical assistance to local fire departments in the suppression of urban fires.
- Provide procedures and resources for controlling and suppressing all fires created from a catastrophic disaster.
- Assist MEMA in designing and delivering training and exercise programs.

Mississippi Military Department (MMD)

- Support fire suppression in concert with requests from ESF#4 through MEMA.
- Maintain and update resources list of firefighting equipment, together with a roster of MMD trained firefighters.
- Support fire suppression with personnel, equipment, and supplies in concert with requests from the MFC through MEMA.
- Coordinate resources needed for firefighting activities on all MS Military properties.
- Arrange liaison for movement of military firefighting resources outside their normal mutual aid zones when required.
- Develop procedures for deploying aircraft for aerial reconnaissance of suspected fire zones.

MS Department of Insurance (MDI)

- Provide information on Insurance in force on facilities as needed.
- Provide types of coverage available, restrictions, requirements, rates, etc. as needed.

MS Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)

- Develop and deliver training to fire services organizations in areas such as Incident Command System, Hazardous Materials Incidents, Emergency Planning, ect.
- Assist with hazard analysis to determine the potential impact of specific hazards on State and Local fire suppression capabilities.
- Coordinate exercises at the state and local level involving fire service/emergency management organizations.
- Provide training materials, public education materials, and other items available through FEMA to local fire service organizations.

ESF Review and Maintenance

- As a minimum, the ESF Coordinator will coordinate an annual review of this annex with all support agencies. Additional reviews may be conducted if experience with a significant incident or other changes indicated a need. Recommended changes will be submitted through the ESF#4 Coordinator to MEMA for approval, publication, and distribution.