

Mississippi Emergency Support Function #9 - Search and Rescue

MS ESF #9 Coordinator:

Mississippi Department of Public Safety

MS Primary Agencies:

Mississippi Department of Public Safety
Mississippi Department of Wildlife,
Fisheries, and Parks
Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mississippi Department of Marine
Resources
Mississippi State Tax Commission
Mississippi Emergency Management
Agency
Mississippi Forestry Commission
Mississippi Insurance Department

MS Supporting Agencies

Civil Air Patrol
MS Military Department
Mississippi Department of Corrections
Mississippi State Fire Academy
Mississippi Institute of Higher
Learning/Miss Automated
Resource Information System

Federal ESF Coordinator

Department of Homeland Security

Federal Primary Agency

Department of Homeland Security / Federal
Emergency Management Agency
Department of Homeland Security / United
States Coast Guard
Department of Interior / National Park
Service & US Fish and Wildlife
Service
Department of Defense /United States Air
Force/Air Force Rescue
Coordination Center

Purpose

The key to any Search and Rescue (SAR) effort is timely response, flexibility, organization, and cooperation among the various agencies involved. The purpose of this document is to frame organizational responsibilities and concepts for conducting search and rescue (SAR) operations that have overwhelmed local resources. It also clarifies the roles and responsibilities of State Agencies in coordinating personnel, equipment, and other resources to assist local governments in their search and rescue efforts.

This state plan will address several forms of search and rescue , which require varying levels of technical expertise and equipment.

Scope

- If an emergency or major disaster occurs that overwhelms local resources, the ESF#9 of the Mississippi Emergency Operations Plan will be activated to provide assistance in accordance with Title 33-15 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, annotated. Additional support, as needed, will be obtained through the Statewide Mutual Aid Compact (SMAC) or the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). In extreme events, the State may request the activation of one or more Federal assets for missions within Mississippi.
- Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) includes, but is not limited to, locating, extracting, and providing immediate emergency medical assistance to victims trapped in a collapsed structure. US&R is a highly technical field, requiring specialized equipment and training to such a degree that an event requiring US&R will almost automatically exceed local response capabilities and trigger State or Federal assistance.
- Overland Search and Rescue (OS&R) may consist of a search of vacant structures, non-urban, and wilderness search and rescue activities which include, but are not limited to, emergency incidents that involve locating downed aircraft and missing persons, extraction, and treating any victims upon rescue. The vast majority of these incidents are handled by local resources without the need for State assistance.

Situation and Assumptions

Situation

- The State SAR Response System assists and augments county and municipal Search and Rescue capabilities. Statewide Mutual Aid Compact (SMAC) may be utilized if SAR operations overextend the resources and capabilities of local government officials. Requests can be made to participant counties for personnel, search and rescue dogs/teams, equipment etc. Request for assistance from one of Mississippi's Regional Response Teams (RRTs) must be made through the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC).
- At no point will state or local assets be considered federal assets. Under the National Response Framework (NRF) Federal US&R Task Forces are federal assets in accordance with the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act and other applicable authorities.
- MS Military Department personnel can assist with SAR; but before they can assist, they must be put on State Active Duty (SAD) by Executive Order of the Governor.
- If SAR operations overextend the resources and capabilities of the state, then search and rescue resources from other States may be requested through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). All requests for EMAC assistance will be processed and tracked through the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency.
- The ability of the State of Mississippi to effectively provide the requested assistance is contingent upon the Mississippi Department of Public Safety's (MDPS) capability to identify and request the appropriate state and/or federal agencies to support the search and rescue efforts. It is also contingent upon the effective planning, coordination and management of those search and rescue resources.

Assumptions

- The local Incident Commander will maintain overall command and control of the incident within their respective jurisdiction(s). Any State or Federal SAR assets activated to assist will be under

the operational control of the local Incident Commander and logistically managed by the State SAR Branch Director or SAR Group Supervisor.

- As the lead state agency responsible for search and rescue, MDPS will establish a SAR Branch within the Operations Section of the recognized and established Incident Command System (ICS). All state and federal SAR agencies will operate under the command and control of MDPS, unless a delegation of authority is given to another agency.
- All state and federal agencies responsible for supporting ESF #9 will communicate resource capability to the State SAR Coordinator at the SEOC. The SAR Coordinator will direct needed assets to proceed to the Forward Command Posts to check-in with the SAR Branch Director. The initial Forward Command Post and initial staging area for all incoming SAR assets will be the Mississippi Highway Patrol's District Headquarters for the district where the incident occurs.
- All agencies will operate within the identified ICS structure established by the Incident Commander and/or SAR Branch Director. Each supporting agency will maintain administrative command and control of their own resources and any others assigned to them.
- SAR Branch planning and operations will be consistent with the Incident Action Plan (IAP) established by the Incident Commander.
- It is assumed that an incident severe enough to trigger a Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) response may occur with little (notice) to no warning (no notice). If/when this occurs the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) will approve civilian agency requests for DSCA and Department of Defense (DOD) will respond under the current policies and procedures. At the request of civil authorities, DOD forces may respond to the DSCA incident under Immediate Response authority. If those forces remain at the incident site, they will fall under USNORTHCOM Command and Control. Title 10 military personnel shall not be employed to enforce or execute civil law in violation of United States Code, Title 18, Section 1385 (Posse Comitatus Act), except as otherwise provided by law. Under extraordinary circumstances, the President may direct DOD to lead the federal response.
- National Guard forces will be involved in nearly all DSCA operations. Normally, National Guard forces deployed to the affected state or in response to an Emergency Management Assistance Compact request, will operate under the control of state authorities.

Roles and Responsibilities

Expectations

- Local governments will organize, train and properly equip SAR teams and personnel for all SAR operations within their identified jurisdictions.
- Local governments are expected to conduct periodic evaluations of SAR capabilities and identify trigger points at which time SAR assistance from the state will be requested.
- Local governments will respond to and manage SAR incidents within their capability and call for assistance from the state when the incident overwhelms local capabilities.
- The local Incident Commander will be the senior SAR official during the local incident. The IC will have a plan for coordinating state SAR resources into the Incident Action Plan (IAP) after a request for assistance has been made to the state.

State SAR Support

MS ESF #9 Coordinator Support

Local governments have the primary responsibility for search and rescue operations within their legally established jurisdictions. If and when additional SAR capability is necessary, the local government can request additional assistance from the State. When the request has been made, and approval given, the Mississippi Department of Public Safety (MDPS) will assume the lead for managing all state SAR operations and resources. This may include resources assigned to MDPS, as well as resources provided by other state agencies. The MDPS will work closely with local officials to ensure the most appropriate use of SAR resources to meet the operational objectives established by the local IC.

State Agency Support

Several state agencies have been identified and designated as primary and supporting agencies to ESF #9 and MDPS during state declared disasters. When those agencies are activated they will communicate directly with the SEOC ESF #9 chair to provide a list of available resources to support the SAR efforts. Resources will remain assigned to their home agencies until called up by the SEOC and assigned to an operational commander. Parent agencies will retain administrative responsibilities for their assets, even when those assets are employed in SAR operations. All agencies will support the established operational goals and objectives.

Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) Support

Currently all 50 states belong to the EMAC system. These state-to-state agreements provide resources to the requesting state for support of disaster operations. If a disaster overwhelms the state's SAR resources, MDPS, through the SEOC, may request additional SAR resources through the EMAC system. This may include Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) teams from participating states and/or other ESF #9 Supporting Agencies. EMAC resources will be coordinated through the SEOC and assigned appropriately. State EMAC US&R teams will be assigned to MDPS, under the command and control of the SAR Branch Director.

Federal Agency Support

United States Department of Homeland Security / FEMA

- The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides various support resources to states requesting assistance. FEMA is the Primary Agency responsible for ESF #9, Urban Search and Rescue. When local and state SAR resources have been exhausted the state is expected to call for federal assistance.
- There are currently 28 US&R teams within the National US&R System. The National US&R System also provides Incident Support Teams (IST) to support the local and state SAR objectives and manages the assigned US&R teams. US&R teams are typed in two different configurations with similar but different capabilities. A Type III US&R team is staffed by 28 persons and a support staff of 6. The primary capability of a Type III US&R team is conducting wide area search and rescue operations in light frame construction such as residential units. A Type I US&R team consists of 70 members and 10 support personnel with appropriate resources to conduct search and rescue operations in heavy floor and heavy wall type structures. The primary mission of these US&R teams is to locate, extricate and provide initial medical care to victims of collapsed structures.

- For incidents such as hurricanes, the National US&R Response Systems has pre-scripted mission assignments for deploying and staging US&R teams and IST(s). These stated resources will be immediately available to the state, through the Federal Emergency Response Team (ERT-A), located at the FEMA Joint Field Office (JFO). If and when the State SAR Coordinator determines that requests federal SAR assistance is needed, the request will be made through SEOC and the ERT. Once the request has been approved, the ERT will direct the FEMA ESF #9 Leader to move US&R teams into the assigned operational theater. The IST Leader will work directly with the SAR Branch Director.

United States Department of Defense (DOD)

- DOD is a Support Agency for ESF #9. It serves as primary source of fixed-wing and/or rotary-wing transportation for US&R Incident Support Team(s). U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) was established Oct. 1, 2002 to provide command and control of Department of Defense (DOD) homeland defense efforts and to coordinate military assistance to civil authorities.
- US NORTHCOM's civil support mission includes domestic disaster relief operations that occur during fires, hurricanes, floods and earthquakes. Support also includes counter-drug operations and managing the consequences of a terrorist event employing a weapon of mass destruction. The command provides assistance to a Primary Agency when tasked by DOD. Per the Posse Comitatus Act, military forces can provide civil support, but cannot become directly involved in law enforcement.
- In providing civil support, USNORTHCOM generally operates through established Joint Task Forces subordinate to the command. An emergency must exceed the capabilities of local, state and federal agencies before USNORTHCOM becomes involved. In most cases, support will be limited, localized and specific. When the scope of the disaster is reduced to the point that the Primary Agency can again assume full control and management without military assistance, USNORTHCOM will exit, leaving the on-scene experts to finish the job.

United States Coast Guard (USCG)

The USCG develops, maintains, and operates rescue facilities for the promotion of safety on, under, and over waters subject to U.S. jurisdiction and has been designated as the lead agency for waterborne (i.e. maritime) SAR under the NSP. USCG personnel are highly trained and experienced in waterborne search and rescue operations and possess specialized expertise, facilities, and equipment for carrying out responses to maritime distress situations. Additionally, USCG staffing at Area/District/Sector Command Centers promotes effective localized interaction, coordination, and communications with state, local, and tribal emergency managers during Incidents of National Significance in which waterborne search and rescue resource allocation is required. For all SAR operations, which are none, maritime (over U.S. waters) the U.S. Coast Guard will generally require a Mission Assignment number from FEMA.

Non-Government Organization (NGO) Support

There are a wide variety of NGOs that provide various services in support of disaster operations. Those NGOs in support of SAR operations can/will provide individuals and resources to assist with the search and subsequent rescue of disaster victims. Properly trained and equipped Technical Rescue Teams (TRT) may be available for assisting the SAR Branch Director. There are currently a few groups that specialize in technical animal rescue. Technical Animal Rescue Teams (TART) provides trained and equipped personnel capable the rescue and control of household pets, including difficult to access animals, aggressive animals, and non-typical pets such as snakes. In most cases these individuals and non-government organizations will need logistics support to sustain multi-day operations.

Staffing Requirements

Based on the requirements of the disaster response all Primary and Supporting Agencies are expected to provide the appropriate level of staffing to meet the needs of the incident. This may require agencies to deploy personnel to the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in Pearl and/or forward command post(s) near the operational theater. Agency representatives must be knowledgeable about the resource capability of their agency procedures for acquiring those resources, and have the authority to commit those resources.

Concept of Operations

General

- MDPS is responsible for coordinating all State SAR operations, and providing support based upon local jurisdictional needs. Initial SAR requirements and response will be conducted by local authorities for unanticipated events.
- Executive Order #653 and the Search and Rescue Agreement between the State of Mississippi and the U.S. Air Force Executive Agent for Inland SAR support of the National SAR Plan, assigns MPDS as the State agency responsible for missing aircraft searches in the State.
- The Sheriff's Office in each county is responsible for conducting missing persons searches within the State. MDPS will coordinate all searches with the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center (AFRCC), county sheriffs, other law enforcement agencies, as well as private and public search and rescue groups as requested by local officials.
- The incident commander will be the senior official, or their designee, from the local agency with jurisdiction over SAR in accordance with local plans.
- If a State or Federal emergency/disaster is declared, then MDPS will assume incident SAR command and coordination duties as the State ESF#9 Coordinator. Each participating agency will coordinate its support with the ESF#9 chair at the SEOC.
- MDPS will establish a SAR Coordinator at the SEOC and a SAR Branch Director at the Forward Command Post. The SAR Coordinator and SAR Branch Director are responsible for assembling and distributing SAR personnel and equipment to the local SAR Incident Commanders. The MDPS SAR Branch Director is also responsible for the SAR COMMS Plan and the logistical support of all SAR teams.
- All State and/or Federal SAR assets shall be credentialed and receive mission assignments via the SAR Coordinator at the SEOC. Once units are credentialed and receive a mission assignment, they will check-in with the SAR Branch Director at the Forward Command Post.
- The SAR Branch Director or the SAR Group Supervisor (if assigned) shall distribute SAR assets to the various local SAR Incident Commanders for tasking within a given operational period.
- If State emergency search and rescue resources have either been exhausted or are expected to be exhausted prior to meeting the demand, MDPS or any Unified Command may recommend that assistance be requested from other States through the Emergency

Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), or from FEMA. Such requests to FEMA for assistance would prompt the implementation of the National or Regional Response Plan.

Pre-incident Operations

Pre-incident operations include a wide variety of functions to ensure safe and efficient SAR operations after a disaster occurs

Planning Functions

- Each state agency identified as either a primary or support agency to the ESF #9 function, should develop agency plans to cope with extended disaster operations. This includes the development of policies and procedures to ensure appropriate staffing and logistical support from their agencies throughout disaster response operations.
- Specific staffing requirements will be based on the scope of the disaster, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the agency. Agencies should plan to provide personnel on a 24 hour, seven-day-a week basis for up to three weeks.

Training

Based on the roles and responsibilities of agencies supporting SAR operations, agency managers are expected to ensure that deployed personnel are properly trained to perform their assigned functions. It is expected that those agencies will maintain training records of those deployed personnel and provide the appropriate continuing education requirements to maintain the knowledge, skills, and abilities of their assigned and deployed personnel. If technical skills based training is required to maintain proficiency at the assigned position, agency managers will ensure that training is provided in an appropriate and timely manner.

Exercises

Periodically, and whenever appropriate, supporting agencies to the SAR plan should exercise the elements of the plan within their own agency and with other supporting agencies. This may include tabletop exercises (TTX) designed to work through the specific activities that may be encountered during SAR operations. Whenever possible full field exercises (FFX) will be conducted to provide primary and supporting agencies with an opportunity to test the elements of the plan in real time.

Pre-incident Deployment

For potential impending threats of disaster such as incoming hurricanes, primary and supporting agencies of the SAR Plan should be prepared to pre-deploy assets. The level of pre-deployed assets will be based upon the potential threat. Agencies should ensure that their equipment and personnel are prepared to pre-deploy and are capable of sustaining SAR operations for a minimum of three days after the incident.

Incident Operations

Once the local Incident Commander has requested SAR assistance from the state through the SEOC, MDPS officials will be activated for response. MDPS will scale its response based upon the type of assistance requested and the scope of the disaster. All response will be scaled to meet the needs of the incident.

Incident Management System

- As required by State and Federal directives, incidents, which result in either a declared State of Emergency or Federal Disaster will be managed using the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS). NIMS and ICS provide flexibility to incident commanders in the structure and implementation of the management system.
- In most cases the state activated SAR operations will be coordinated by the SAR Coordinator (ESF#9 chair) that reports directly to the Operations Section Chief at the SEOC. On scene direction of State SAR operations will be directed by the senior MDPS official designated who will be designated as the SAR Branch Director. The SAR Coordinator and the SAR Branch Director will develop the organizational support and deploy the resources necessary to meet the operational search and rescue objectives of the Incident Commander.

Search and Rescue Operations

Search and rescue operations should begin as soon as possible after state activated resources have been assembled. The initial state SAR representative on the scene will coordinate with the local Incident Commander and/or his/her designee to establish lines of authority, operational objectives, reporting requirements, and local base of operations.

- MDPS will establish a Forward Command Post (FCP) as soon as possible after arrival of state SAR resources into the effected area. Simultaneously, MDPS will begin coordination of SAR operations from the SEOC. In the event of an unanticipated incident, the first State SAR representatives on scene shall perform an immediate needs assessment and immediately report critical needs to the SEOC. Activation of supporting agencies will depend on the type and scope of the disaster.
- Generally speaking, the following will be used as a guide to determine the “trigger points” to determine if Federal and/or EMAC SAR resources will be required.
 - If SMART searches cannot be completed within the first 24 hours after the disaster strikes with the on scene or responding SAR resources. SMART searches are defined as a search involving a specific facility or location, such as a nursing home or hospital, which is known to contain persons that did not evacuate prior to the disaster occurring.
 - If HASTY searches of the entire impacted area cannot be completed within the first 24 hours after the disaster strikes with the on scene or responding SAR resources. HASTY searches are defined as a fast paced visual inspection of the area to be searched accompanied by vocal or audio hailing.
 - If a PRIMARY search of the entire impacted area cannot be completed within 48 hours after the disaster strikes with the on scene or responding SAR resources. A PRIMARY search is defined as a search that involves walking completely around every building in the impacted area and looking into windows and doors accompanied by hailing for victims. Primary searches may include entry into buildings if approved by local authorities.

- If a SECONDARY search of the entire impacted area cannot be completed within 72 hours after the disaster strikes with the on scene or responding SAR resources. A SECONDARY search is defined as the highest standard of search and involves a thorough and systematic search of every room of every building within the impacted area. Forced entry of structures will be done only after authority is given by local officials. An appropriate search marking system will be left at the obvious entrance to the structure indicating entry has been made and the results of the search.
- Based upon the operational objectives established by the Incident Commander, the resources available, and the orders given, the senior MDPS official on the scene will begin conducting SAR operations. The initial SAR plan should include completion of SMART and HASTY searches as soon as possible. This may include the use of rescue aircraft, rescue boats, and ground SAR resources. While conducting searches, SAR personnel will make every attempt possible to locate and extricate victims needing and/or requesting assistance. This will include the rescue/removal of victim's household pets if requested by the victims. SAR personnel will immediately begin the process of accounting for and the tracking of victims and pets. The location of pets that cannot be removed with the victims will be documented for follow up extrication/evacuation and tracking. All rescued persons, including their household pets, will be delivered to the pre-identified lily pads for tracking, triage and initial medical care.
- If the initial reports indicate a need to activate Federal and/or EMAC SAR resources, the senior MDPS official will begin making preparations to support and manage incoming SAR resources through the SEOC and the SAR Group Supervisor at the forward command post.
- If SAR operations will require more than one operational period, a regular planning cycle will be established for the purpose of establishing objectives, identifying and acquiring necessary resources, and the deployment of SAR resources in an organized and methodical manner. The planning cycle with meeting and briefing times will be established by the SAR Branch Director in coordination with local, state and federal officials. The meeting and briefing times will be communicated to all concerned entities and personnel.
- After the SAR objectives established by the local Incident Commander have been accomplished, the SAR Coordinator in coordination with the SAR Branch Director will begin to demobilize SAR resources. Prior to demobilizing SAR resources a debriefing will be conducted for the purpose of continuity of operations and/or after action concerns.

Reporting Requirements

- To facilitate overall search and rescue command and control and situational awareness, SAR groups should maintain communications with the SAR Group Supervisor. The SAR Group Supervisor will coordinate reporting items with the SAR Branch Director to provide regular situation reports (SITREP) to the state EOC and the JFO Operations Section. Individual units within the SAR Group will be responsible for maintaining their own internal communications to ensure the safety of all personnel assigned to them and meet the reporting requirements established by the SAR Branch Director.
- As Per the reporting requirements established by the Operations Section Chief and SAR Coordinator, Situation Reports must be provided to the SAR Branch Director and SEOC in a timely manner. Doing so will provide necessary information for logistics and planning of the next operational period. All SAR personnel will be required to report any exceptions, such as serious injury or death to any SAR personnel.

- All units assigned to the SAR Branch will be required to document all expenditures and other pertinent records to ensure reimbursement of expenses by the state and/or federal government.

Development and Maintenance

- The Commissioner, Mississippi Department of Public Safety is the approving authority for this plan and is responsible for the approval and implementation of its content.
- The designated Search and Rescue Coordinator from Mississippi Department of Public Safety is responsible for the development, maintenance and distribution of this plan.
- The Commissioner of MDPS and/or his designee is responsible for conducting an annual review of this document, in conjunction with SEOC and all supporting agencies to this plan, and updating the plan based on lessons learned from exercises and actual events.

Support Agencies

Agency	Functions
Civil Air Patrol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide air support during rescue operations ▪ Provide additional personnel and equipment for SAR
MS Military Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide air support during SAR missions ▪ Coordinate military equipment and resources needed for SAR
MS Department of Corrections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide personnel for SAR support ▪ Identify equipment for use during SAR missions
MS State Fire Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify/coordinate SAR teams from local and volunteer resources ▪ Provide needed equipment in support of SAR missions
MARIS (IHL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide technical support in areas affected for rescue operations ▪ Recruit/manage GIS personnel for rescue operations