

**Joint Field Office**

The Joint Field Office (JFO) is the primary Federal incident management field structure. The JFO 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.

Although the JFO uses an ICS structure, it does not manage on-scene operations. Rather, the JFO provides support to on-scene efforts.

**JFO Leadership (Unified Coordination Group)**

The Unified Coordination Group provides leadership within the Joint Field Office. The Unified Coordination Group:

- Is comprised of senior leaders representing State and Federal interests, and in certain circumstances tribal governments, local jurisdictions, the private sector, or nongovernmental organizations.
- Applies unified command principles to coordinating assistance being provided to support the local, tribal, and State response.

**Unified Coordination Group Members**

The composition of the Unified Coordination Group varies, depending upon the scope and nature of the incident. For a Stafford Act incident, two key group members include:

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**Federal  
Coordinating  
Officer (FCO)**

The Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) is appointed by the President to execute Stafford Act authorities. The FCO is the primary Federal representative with whom the State, tribal, and local response officials interface to identify needs and set objectives for an effective collaborative response. The FCO's major responsibilities include:

- Coordinate pre-incident/pre-declaration activities. (If pre-designated as FCO.)
- Coordinate Federal activities related to Stafford Act disasters and emergencies.
- Manage government relationships.
- Direct the efficient establishment and operation of the JFO facility and organization.
- Manage media, community, and other external relationships.
- Manage the administrative and financial needs of the Federal disaster response.
- Manage the demobilization of the JFO.

The Deputy FCO's major responsibilities include:

- Assuming FCO responsibilities in his or her absence.
  - Assisting with all duties delegated by the FCO.
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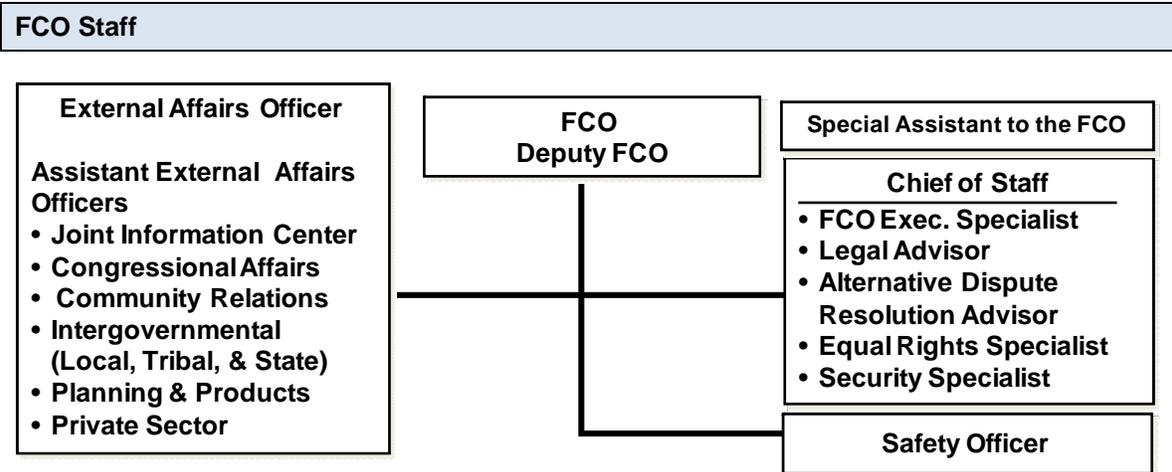
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<b>State Coordinating Officer (SCO)</b>	The State Coordinating Officer (SCO) is the individual appointed by the Governor to coordinate State disaster assistance efforts with those of the Federal Government. The SCO plays a critical role in managing 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.
<b>Federal Resource Coordinator (FRC)</b>	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 a FRC. In these situations, the FRC coordinates support through interagency agreements and memorandums of understanding.
<b>Senior Federal Law Enforcement Official</b>	The Senior Federal Law Enforcement Official (SFLEO) is an individual 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
<b>Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO)</b>	The Department of Defense (DOD) has appointed 10 Defense Coordinating Officers (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.
<b>Other Senior Officials</b>	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 nongovernmental organizations may participate in a Unified Coordination Group. Usually, the larger and more complex the incident, the greater the number of entities represented.
<b>Principal Federal Official</b>	For catastrophic or unusually complex incidents, the Secretary of Homeland Security may designate a single Principal Federal Official (PFO) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Serve in the field as his or her primary representative to ensure consistency and effectiveness of Federal support and incident management.</li><li>• Interface with Federal, State, tribal, and local jurisdictional officials regarding the overall Federal incident management strategy.</li><li>• Provide a primary point of contact and situational awareness locally.</li><li>• Act as the primary Federal spokesperson for coordinated media and public communications.</li></ul>

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Source: *National Response Framework*



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| <b>Chief of Staff</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manages the JFO administrative functions.</li> <li>• Oversees efficient functioning of all staff elements.</li> <li>• Interfaces with the FCO and Section Chiefs/staff on internal issues needing resolution.</li> <li>• Manages FCO staff.</li> <li>• Oversees the ongoing professional development of assigned personnel.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Special Assistant to the FCO</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serves as a confidential advisor to the FCO.</li> <li>• Monitors information on current situation and expected developments to identify potential risks, threats, and consequences.</li> <li>• Assists the FCO on the development of policy and strategic planning.</li> <li>• Oversees compliance with statutes, regulations, and other legal requirements by continually monitoring JFO operations.</li> <li>• Organizes working sessions and meetings to analyze issues and develops optional strategies for the FCO to consider.</li> <li>• Serves as a liaison to other Federal agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector.</li> <li>• Represents the FCO at External Affairs events such as press conferences, VIP visits, community meetings, etc.</li> <li>• Oversees the implementation of special projects.</li> <li>• Identifies resources (personnel, supply, services, etc.) constraints and propose solutions.</li> </ul> |
| <b>FCO Executive Specialist</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishes and maintains Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO)/Deputy FCO files.</li> <li>• Provides administrative support to the FCO/Deputy FCO.</li> <li>• Manages FCO/Deputy FCO contacts.</li> <li>• Serves as liaison with Section Chiefs.</li> </ul>  |

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<b>Legal Advisor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identifies potential legal issues.</li><li>• Gathers information and conducts legal research.</li><li>• Analyzes the facts, context, and the law to develop opinions, recommendations, and solutions.</li><li>• Provides legal advice, instruction, and communication.</li><li>• Prepares disaster declaration documents and resolve declaration-related issues.</li><li>• Processes external requests for information.</li></ul>
<b>Alternative Dispute Resolution Advisor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides prompt, expert means of resolving disputes and promote conflict prevention strategies and skills at disaster sites.</li><li>• Facilitates public participation, policy making and collaborative decision-making groups, as requested.</li><li>• Mediates legal, contract, procurement, and other complex disputes.</li></ul>
<b>Equal Rights Specialist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identifies potential Equal Employment Opportunity and Civil Rights issues.</li><li>• Provides information and assistance on issues pertaining to sexual harassment, Affirmative Action, and Equal Employment Opportunity</li><li>• Ensures nondiscrimination in hiring decisions and in staffing and managing the JFO, DRCs, and other disaster operations offices.</li><li>• Ensures that the administration and service delivery of the JFO or DRCs are conducted without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or physical or mental disability.</li></ul>
<b>Security Specialist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conducts security needs and FEMA Security Program needs assessment.</li><li>• Identifies available local law enforcement agencies and their resource capabilities.</li><li>• Sets up secure environment for personnel identification operations (i.e., badging and fingerprinting).</li><li>• Develops and implements Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP) for JFOs and other field facilities.</li><li>• Establishes and monitors security field operations.</li></ul>
<b>Safety Officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advises management officials in charge of FEMA worksites of all occupational safety and health matters.</li><li>• Assists management officials in implementation of Federal, State, tribal, and local safety and health requirements.</li><li>• Assesses local risk and determine need for FEMA safety and health programs.</li><li>• Develops the Incident Safety Plan.</li><li>• Conducts inspections, surveys, and audits to identify safety and health hazards, and make recommendations for abatement and implementation of FEMA safety and health programs.</li><li>• Acts to respond to an emergency or prevent others' unsafe acts.</li></ul>
<b>Liaison Officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Serves as the point of contact for assisting and coordinating agencies not otherwise represented in the JFO.</li></ul>

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**External  
Affairs  
Officer**

Manages all External Affairs elements including:

- Joint Information Center (JIC): Joint Information Center activities ensure the coordinated and timely release of incident-related prevention, preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation information to the public.
- Congressional Affairs: Congressional Affairs provides information to the Washington, DC, and district offices of Members of Congress. It addresses incident related questions, concerns, and problems expressed by their constituents.
- Community Relations: Community Relations program provides the vital information link between the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, the State and local communities, and those affected by disasters.
- Intergovernmental (State, Local, and Tribal Affairs): State, local, and tribal coordination assists the PFO, FCO, and JFO with direct communications interaction and outreach to public and elected officials. Tribal Affairs provides procedures to facilitate incident management programs and resources available to tribal governments to assist them in protecting their families, community livelihood, and cultural and environmental resources.
- Private Sector: Private Sector coordination assists the PFO, FCO, and JFO with communications involving counterparts in the non-governmental and commercial areas.
- Planning and Products: Planning and Products develops all external and internal communications strategies and products for the External Affairs organization and components. This includes recognition of the need for specialized communications procedures to cover language and special needs.

Source: ESF #15 SOP

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Additional information about JFO position responsibilities is available in the JFO taskbooks at [www.learningservices.us/fema/taskbooks](http://www.learningservices.us/fema/taskbooks).

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**JFO Sections**

Although the JFO Sections use ICS titles, their function is to support rather than command the incident. Below is a summary of the different roles assumed by each Section.

<b>Section</b>	<b>Joint Field Office</b>	<b>Incident Command (On-Scene)</b>
<b>Operations</b>	The JFO 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.	The Incident Command Operations Section is responsible for all tactical incident operations and implementation of the Incident Action Plan. In the Incident Command System, it normally includes subordinate Branches, Divisions, and/or Groups.
<b>Planning</b>	The JFO 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.	The Incident Command Planning Section is responsible for the collection, evaluation, and dissemination of operational information related to the incident, and for the preparation and documentation of the Incident Action Plan. This Section also maintains information on the current and forecasted situation and on the status of resources assigned to the incident.
<b>Logistics</b>	The JFO 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.	The Incident Command Logistics Section is responsible for providing facilities, services, and material support for the incident. It also provides facilities, security (of the Incident Command facilities), transportation, supplies, equipment maintenance and fuel, food services, communications and information technology support, and emergency responder medical services, including inoculations, as required.
<b>Finance and Administration</b>	The JFO 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.	The Incident Command Finance and Administration Section responsible for all administrative and financial considerations surrounding an incident. Some of the functions that fall within the scope of this Section are recording personnel time, maintaining vendor contracts, overseeing compensation and claims, and conducting an overall cost analysis for the incident.

Source: *National Response Framework Glossary* ([www.fema.gov/nrf](http://www.fema.gov/nrf))