

TEXAS FIRE AND RESCUE MUTUAL AID PLAN

I. INTRODUCTION

The *Texas Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan* is an extension of and supportive document to the State of Texas Emergency Management Plan.

The State of Texas Emergency Management Plan is published as follows:

Part One: Basic Emergency Plan
Part Two: Various Attachments

1. Emergency Management Council
2. Disaster District Boundaries
3. Matrix of Responsibilities
4. Primary Federal/State Functional Responsibilities
5. State Functional Annex Assignments
6. Summary of Council Agency Responsibilities
7. Channels for Requesting Operational Assistance
8. Request Procedures for Military Assistance

The State of Texas Emergency Management Plan provides the planning basis and concepts for the development of the *Texas Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan*. This Plan supports the concepts of the Incident Command System (ICS), the Integrated Emergency Management System (IEMS) and multi-hazard response planning. It is intended that more detailed operational plans will supplement this document at the local, area and regional levels. Texas fire and rescue service conducts emergency operations planning at four levels: Local, County, Regional and State. To effectively implement plans formulated at the various levels, all plans should be developed within the framework of the *Texas Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan*.

II. AUTHORITIES

This plan is issued under the authority of and in accordance with the provisions of the *Texas Disaster Act of 1975, Texas Government Code Annotated, Chapter 418.109*. Authorities governing its enactment and implementation are as follow:

References

Federal Civil Defense Guide (Part E, Chapter 10, with Appendices, Fire Prevention and Control during Civil Defense Emergencies)
National Interagency Incident Management System
Multi-agency Coordination System
Incident Command System
Standardized Emergency Management System

III. PURPOSE

- A. To provide for systematic mobilization, organization and operation of necessary fire and rescue response and recovery resources of the state and its political subdivisions in mitigating the effects of disasters, whether natural or man-caused.
- B. To encourage development of comprehensive and compatible plans and procedures for the expedient mobilization and response of available fire and rescue resources on a local, county and regional basis.
- C. To establish guidelines for recruiting and training auxiliary personnel in operations, logistics, planning and finance to support regularly organized fire and rescue personnel during disaster operations.
- D. To provide an annually updated fire and rescue inventory of available mutual aid personnel, apparatus and equipment in Texas.
- E. To encourage the interchange and dissemination of fire and rescue-related data, directives and information between fire and rescue entities of local, state, federal agencies, private and other groups.
- F. To promote annual training and/or exercises between plan participants.
- G. To provide a communication plan that will provide common radio frequencies for use statewide by state and local public safety and special emergency agencies during periods of man-made and natural disasters or other emergencies where interagency coordination is required.

IV. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. The State of Texas frequently experiences the effects of emergencies and disasters that threaten lives, property, public health, the environment and public safety.
2. Local resources may be overwhelmed by the occurrence of catastrophic disasters and thus require the activation of mutual aid resources under a pre-planned, coordinated effort.
3. The combined resources within the state when mobilized can cope with most disasters.
4. Authority to mobilize local resources rests with the local jurisdiction(s).
5. A wide diversity of capabilities exists among emergency responders.
6. The state is divided into disaster districts to facilitate the coordination of mutual aid. Through this system, the Governor's Division of Emergency Management (DEM) is informed of conditions in each disaster district of the state and of the occurrence or imminent threat of disaster.

7. The number of deaths and injuries caused by a disaster is directly influenced by the effectiveness of mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery operations.
8. Under the *State of Texas Emergency Management Plan*, agencies are identified with specific emergency service functions, including those that are mandated by state law.

B. Assumptions

1. The State and its political subdivisions will continue to experience emergency situations and disasters, which may cause death, injury and damage.
2. Fire and rescue officials must preplan emergency operations to ensure efficient utilization of available resources.
3. Basic to Texas emergency planning is a statewide system of mutual aid in which each jurisdiction relies first upon its own resources, except in those situations where state law requires that a state agency exercise lead responsibility or where local government requires special expertise.
4. No jurisdiction shall be required to unreasonably deplete its own resources in furnishing mutual aid.
5. The responsible local official in the jurisdiction where an incident requires mutual aid shall remain in command of the incident including the direction of personnel and equipment. The local official may delegate the command authority. This may be done formally by execution of a Delegation of Authority form (**Appendix 2**).
6. Federal level response and recovery assistance may be necessary to provide for public safety before, during and after a catastrophic event in Texas.
7. Disasters occurring outside the State of Texas may require an organized mutual aid response by local resources from Texas.
8. The County Mutual Aid Coordinator(s) will initiate local mutual aid response. Texas Forest Service (TFS) Regional Fire Coordinator or Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) may, with assistance from the District Disaster Chairperson (DDC), initiate regional response (as seen in **Appendix 13**).
9. It is expected that facilities and resources in a disaster area will suffer widespread damage and destruction. This situation may require the immediate activation of the *Texas Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan*.
10. Proper implementation of this plan will save lives, minimize injuries and reduce or prevent disaster-related losses.

V. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

The State of Texas Emergency Management Plan is the basic planning document for state-level

comprehensive emergency management actions. The plan consists of a Basic Plan and functional appendices which provide general coordination responsibilities and/or actions required during all phases of emergency management. Each of the separate annexes identifies and outlines, at a minimum, those actions (categorized by hazard and readiness/response level) needed from each of the appropriate agencies within each functional support group.

The *Texas Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan* provides a supplement to the State of Texas Emergency Management Plan for mobilization of local resources to respond to disasters.

An emergency will be met at the lowest and most suitable level of government having the capability appropriate to the emergency situation. For the most part, the local and state departments or agencies that are responsible for certain functions on a daily basis will retain those responsibilities during emergency response and disaster recovery operations.

The scale of mutual aid activities can vary depending on the size, duration and complexity of an incident. In terms of mutual aid response, there are four general categories.

- Local - Response occurs under existing local mutual aid agreements.
- Regional - Response occurs outside the boundaries of local mutual aid agreements but within a DPS Disaster District.
- Statewide - Response occurs across the state.
- National - Response to disasters outside of Texas.

Development of a regional and statewide mutual aid system depends on the establishment of an organizational structure linking communities, counties, disaster districts, state agencies, federal agencies and other states. The following provides a basic framework of the key individuals who may be involved in mobilization:

Fire Response	Search and Rescue Response
1. County Mutual Aid Coordinator	County Mutual Aid Coordinator
2. Department of Public Safety (DPS) Disaster District Chairperson	DPS Disaster District Chairperson
3. Department of Emergency Management (DEM) State Coordinator	DEM State Coordinator
4. Texas Forest Service (TFS) Regional Fire Coordinator	Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) Regional Staff
5. TFS Fire Chief	TEEX Chief
7. Texas Interagency Coordination Center (TICC)	Federal Emergency Management Agency

The *Texas Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan* does not supersede existing local and state mutual aid agreements, including interstate COMPACT agreements.

VI. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Organization

County Mutual Aid Coordinator. This position will serve as the local point of contact for mutual aid requests that are outside the boundaries of local mutual aid agreements.

DEM State Coordinator. This position is the point of contact for requesting state resources outside the effected Disaster District boundary during statewide mutual aid mobilizations.

DPS Disaster District Chairperson. This position is the point of contact for requesting state resources within the boundaries of the Disaster District to local jurisdictions. The Chairperson is the point of contact with the Division of Emergency Management State Coordinator if state resources from outside the Disaster District are required.

DPS Regional Liaison Officer (RLO). Advisor and liaison to DPS Disaster District Chairperson.

TEEX Regional Staff. This position will represent rescue resources on the DPS Disaster District Committees. The role of the coordinator is to serve as the point of contact for regional and statewide requests for local rescue resources and maintain regional rescue resource lists.

TEEX Rescue Chief. This position is the point of contact for rescue resources during statewide mutual aid mobilization.

TICC Coordinator. This position serves as the point of contact for mobilization fire fighting resources during statewide mutual aid responses. The role of the coordinator is to serve as the point of contact for ordering statewide and national fire fighting resources. They maintain a list of resources available statewide for mutual aid response and track the movement of resources by incident.

TFS Regional Fire Coordinator. This position will represent fire and rescue services and county Mutual Aid Coordinators on DPS Disaster District Committees. The role of the coordinator is to serve as point of contact for regional and statewide mutual aid requests for local fire and rescue service resources and to maintain regional fire and rescue resource lists.

VII. DIRECTION AND CONTROL

The state is divided into Disaster Districts which coincide with the existing boundaries of the DPS Highway Patrol Districts. Each county will have a Mutual Aid Coordinator who is appointed by the County Judge from a list of candidates provided by the fire/rescue organizations within the county.

Requests for mutual aid assistance and related response on the local level will occur under existing mutual aid agreements. This will not require the involvement of district or state organizations.

When local resources are insufficient to meet the requirements of an incident, a request for

assistance will be submitted to the Disaster District Chairperson. Resources available within the District will be obtained through the Disaster District Committee. State resources from within the District will be provided by the state agencies that make up the Committee. Rescue resources from within the Disaster District will be obtained by the TEEEX regional staff working with the County Mutual Aid Coordinators.

When Disaster District resources are insufficient to meet the requirements of an incident, a request for additional resources will be placed by the Disaster District Chairperson to the DEM State Coordinator. The Emergency Management Council will provide state resources. Primary agencies will obtain resources through the County Mutual Aid Coordinators. Federal fire resources will be mobilized by a request from the TFS Fire Chief to the Texas Interagency Coordination Center (TICC). Federal rescue resources will be mobilized by request from the DEM State Coordinator to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region VI, in consultation with the TEEEX Rescue Chief.

Command

Command and control of mobilization, incident response and demobilization will occur under the Incident Command System. The Incident Commander of the requesting entities will retain command authority. The requesting entity may delegate command authority to another entity. Unified Command will be established when appropriate.

Safety

Incident Safety Officers will be utilized during Regional and Statewide responses. Their personnel will follow safety policies of the responding entities if the policies are more stringent than the procedures in place on the incident.

Liability

Liability insurance for each person or piece of equipment provided through statewide mutual aid will be provided by the responding agency or organization.

Financial

Costs related to the provision of personnel and resources will initially be borne by the provider who will keep detailed records and may bill the requestor as appropriate.

Standards

The responding organization will be required to meet safety standards appropriate to the incident.

VIII. EMERGENCY RESPONSE LEVELS/ACTION GUIDE

See State of Texas Emergency Management Plan, Section VII.

IX. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT

Lines of succession for personnel with emergency management responsibilities will be in accordance with existing policies and required emergency management standard operating procedures of

each agency/organization.

X. ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT

In order for emergency entities to participate fully in the *Texas Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan*, the following actions will be required:

A. Administration

1. Pre-incident
 - a. Local entity adopts the *Texas Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan* by signing the Master Mutual Aid Agreement (**Appendix 1**).
 - b. Participate in a countywide selection process to nominate the County Mutual Aid Coordinator (**Appendix 3**).
 - c. Each entity should participate in the National Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) (**Appendix 4**).
 - d. The ICS form 209 should be used for reporting large or unusual incidents and sent to TICC (**Appendix 5**).
2. Mobilization
 - a. When Mutual Aid is requested outside of local agreements, a request is made to the County Mutual Aid Coordinator as outlined under Section VII, Direction and Control, page 6.
 - b. Participating entities in the *Texas Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan* may respond with approved equipment unless local conditions prevent disaster response. The County Mutual Aid Coordinator will make this request.
3. Recovery (Post-Response)
 - a. Entities should track costs involved in responding to an incident using forms in **Appendix 6**.
 - b. An After Action Form will be completed and submitted to the requesting entity (**Appendix 7**).
 - c. Incident Safety Officers will be made aware of injuries, accidents, and near misses.

B. Preparedness

Pre-Incident: all entities will meet preparedness standards for personnel and equipment.

1. Personnel

- a. The ICS will be the management system for incident response under the *Texas Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan*. Therefore, all responding personnel must have completed ICS training.
- b. Responding personnel must be trained for the positions and functions for which they are available.
- c. Personnel must be equipped with personal protective equipment (PPE) which meets the standards of the responding unit.

2. Equipment

- a. An inventory of equipment available for mutual aid response will be completed and faxed to TICC (**Appendix 8**).
- b. The TICC will forward the inventory to the County Mutual Aid Coordinator for local/regional use.
- c. Available equipment will be typed according to **Appendix 9**.
- d. Available equipment will meet the requirements for the category for which it is typed.
- e. Apparatus will have an inventory of equipment on board.
- f. Condition of apparatus and inventory may be inspected at incident arrival and departure (demobilization) (**Appendix 10** and **Appendix 11**).
- g. It is recommended that apparatus be equipped with radios capable of communicating on either VHF High Band or 800 MHz frequency as outlined in **Appendix 12**. (See Section 12.12 of Appendix 12 if no radios are available).

C. Operations

Mobilization

1. Activation. This process is outlined in Section VII, Direction and Control (page 6). A flow chart describing this activation process is found in **Appendix 13**.
2. Dispatch. The requesting County Mutual Aid Coordinator will follow procedures for dispatch.
3. Check-In. All responding resources will follow check-in procedures as outlined in **Appendix 14**.
4. Incident Standards of Conduct as outlined in **Appendix 15** will be followed.

5. Demobilization. Checkout standards as outlined in **Appendix 11** will be followed.

XI. DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

A. Development

The Statewide Mutual Aid Committee has the overall responsibility for development of the *Texas Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan*.

B. Maintenance

1. The Statewide Mutual Aid Committee will review and update this Plan as needed. The County Mutual Aid Coordinators may recommend changes and will provide information concerning resource changes that impact their responsibilities.
2. The Committee has the responsibility for maintaining appendices, standard operating procedures, and resource data to ensure prompt and effective response to emergencies.

APPENDICES

1	Master Mutual Aid Agreement	1 Page
2	Delegation of Authority	1 Page
3	Selection Process for County Mutual Aid Coordinator	1 Page
4	National Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)	15 Pages
5	ICS 209--Fire Report	3 Pages
6	Cost Forms	2 Pages
7	After Action	2 Pages
8	Resource Inventory	2 Pages
9	Typing Information	5 Pages
10	Inspection Checklist	2 Pages
11	Demobilization Checkout and Procedures	3 Pages
12	Radio Communications	3 Pages
13	Channels for Requesting Fire & Rescue Operational Assistance	1 Page
14	Check-In List and Procedures	2 Pages
15	Code of Conduct	2 Pages
	Contact List	1 Page